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LA FOLLETTE'S WINNING OF WISCONSIN ¹¹

(1894-1904)

By *Albert O. Barton* ¹²

With an Introduction by Hon. Louis D. Brandeis

At the Birthplace of a Great American.—(R. M. LaF.)

*What a tradition will your high name be,
When the contending years their rage have spent!
Here shall men come with wondering sons in hand,
And pause the while in wistful revery,
Saying: "Here sprang a man, by Nature sent
Forth triple-armed with flame, high heart and zeal,
To front the later dragons of our land,
Whom others fed, nor dared to meet with steel."*

*Your place on History's page not ours to tell,
Nor yet our children's; centuries long may pass,
Ere the impartial muse her oracles
Shall summon; so the recurring grass
Grows where old Israel's thunderers long slept,
Scorned still their race, their truths none but accept.*

—A. O. B.

Illustrated

MADISON, WIS.
1922.

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THE HOMESTEAD COMPANY
DES MOINES, IOWA
1922.



*Not Without Some Prejudice and Errors,
Perhaps, but Designed Sincerely with a
View to Truth and Fairness, This Work—
Written Little by Little, on the Shores of
Both Occans, in Many Cities and Places—
and Under Greatly Varying Circumstances
—Is Submitted to Those Who May Be In-
terested in Learning Something of the More
Intimate Incidental Aspects, the Passions,
Prejudices and Practices of an Interesting
and Significant Transitional Period in the
History of a Great State.*

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ROBERT M. LAFOLLETTE
As Governor of Wisconsin, 1904

FOREWORD

The work herewith published was practically completed in 1914. It was not written primarily for publication, but rather with a view to reflecting the spirit and preserving many illuminating incidents of the controversial period covered while yet they were vivid in the writer's memory. At the time it was undertaken the progressive movement gave promise of developing into a stable political organization with great possibilities in the way of legislation, and a corresponding influence on national policies, as set forth in the opening chapter. The great bulk of the remainder of the work was designed to aid the general student of politics who might be interested in learning how the experience and equipment which Senator LaFollette brought to its leadership were acquired.

As the present political situation in the nation is strongly reminiscent of that existing a decade ago, the work may perhaps not inappropriately be now given to the light. It may perhaps be unnecessary to state that the writer is entirely responsible for what it purports to present, and that Senator LaFollette has in no way had any hand in its preparation, nor read any of its copy.

A. O. B.

INTRODUCTORY

Lovers of American liberty are full of hope; but the period of boyish exuberance has been followed by one of maturer consideration of the grave problems of democracy. The need of solving these problems is urgent. The inherent difficulties are great. There is insistent demand for political and social invention. The best conceived plans for the amelioration of our conditions will require for success laborious development of details, careful adjustment to local conditions, and great watchfulness for years after their introduction. We must encourage such social and political invention, though we feel sure that the successes will be few and the failures many. Most of these inventions can be applied only with the sanction and aid of the government. It is America's good fortune that her federal system furnishes in the forty-eight states political and social laboratories in which these inventions may be separately worked out and tested, thus multiplying the opportunities for inventors and minimizing the dangers of failure.

In this new field of applied political and social science, Wisconsin, under the leadership, and largely owing to the inspiration of Robert M. LaFollette, has occupied the first place. Mr. Barton performs an important public service in recording the history of the Wisconsin struggle for progress and thus helping others to understand the lofty strivings, the courage and patience of those to whom her primacy is largely due.

LOUIS D. BRANDEIS.

Boston, Mass., July 28, 1914.



JOHN J. BLAINE
State Senator (1909-1913)
Early Progressive Leader



HERMAN L. EKERN
Assembly leader and speaker.
Leader in Insurance Legislation.



ROBERT M. LAFOLLETTE, 1914



Photo L. C. Robinson

MRS. ROBERT M. LAFOLLETTE

"Through her his civic service shows a purer-toned ambition"



CONSTRUCTIVE MEN OF LAFOLLETTE ADMINISTRATIONS

1—John R. Commons, assisted drafting reform legislation, member first Industrial Commission. 2—Charles H. McCarthy, first "people's expert" in drafting legislation, head of Legislative Reference Bureau. 3—Chief Justice John B. Winslow, author of Great Opinion Sustaining Workmen's Compensation Law. (Copyrighted by De Longe, Madison, Wis.) 4—William H. Hutton, senate leader in Utility Regulation Legislation. 5—Charles R. Van Hise, under whom as president (1904-1919) University of Wisconsin had remarkable growth.

CHAPTER I

The Republican Insurgent Movement in Congress.

LA FOLLETTE'S FIRST FORMAL SPEECH IN UNITED STATES SENATE CREATES SIGNIFICANT OCCASION—AN HISTORIC WARNING—GROWING UNREST IN CONGRESS—PROGRESSIVE MOVEMENT ORGANIZED AT LA FOLLETTE HOME—ROOSEVELT CANDIDACY SPLITS PROGRESSIVE ELEMENT IN PARTY.

IN the history of American politics April 19, 1906, may be rightly termed an interesting and, to no little extent, a significant day. In one of the ablest discussions of the railroad regulation question that had so far been heard in congress, the lines that day were laid down upon which the various states and the federal government have since found it most practicable to proceed, not only in the regulation of railroads, but of other great activities of capital that affect the daily life of the whole people, and whose growth and development form at once the chief industrial phenomenon and problem of the times. But a further significance was to grow out of the occasion and the discussion to which reference is here made.

The scene is the chamber of the United States senate. The so-called "Hepburn rate bill" is under discussion. A new figure in this storied hall has just obtained the floor—Robert Marion LaFollette of Wisconsin. He is not unknown, even among his senatorial colleagues. He has already served a number of years in the lower house, and for a decade has made a great stir in his state over the railroad question and placed upon his home statute books a variety of "reform" laws whose practicability remains to be determined. Furthermore, his has been

the rather unusual act of withholding resignation of the governorship of his state for a year after his election to the senate in order that he might intrench and perfect these laws.

Not only is the occasion interesting because of the sounding of a new voice, but because a tradition is being violated. The speaker has been in his seat but three months, not appearing until a month after congress had convened. Under the unwritten and time-honored practice of the dignified body of which he has become a member, he should not presume to ask the ear of the senate during his first session at least; yet there he rises with every indication of entering upon a prolonged speech, and upon the great and intricate question of railroad regulation.

Predictions had been freely made in the press, and in political circles, that upon the coming of the "Wisconsin firebrand" to the senate he would be given a reception calculated to cool the ardor with which he had carried on his anti-corporation crusades at home. In short, a "hazing" awaited him should he presume to advance any of his ideas and methods in the senate.

Thus the *Northwestern Christian Advocate* of January 10, 1906, said:

It is stated in the daily press that Ex-Governor LaFollette, who was elected some months ago by the legislature of Wisconsin as the colleague of Senator Spooner in the United States senate, will be subjected to certain treatment when he enters that body such as is usually accorded to new members; and if he should presume to attempt to make a speech in the senate before he has been a member of the body for a certain length of time that the senators will show their disapproval by slipping out of the senate chamber and leaving him to speak to empty seats. If this should be done, the discourtesy will not be to Senator LaFollette, but to the state of Wisconsin.

Evidently the hour when he may expect such demonstration of disapproval from his fellow members is at hand.

LaFollette had devoted years of profound study to the railroad regulation question. He knew that he felt his ground more securely than many of his older colleagues who were droning along on the subject. In the very opening sentence of his speech on this occasion, he laid bare the irrelevancy of much of the discussion, as well as a common legislative trick, by saying:

The opponents of the regulation of railway rates and services have skilfully conducted this debate, almost from the beginning, upon constitutional grounds.

Convinced that he could shed some light on the subject, and feeling it his duty, no less to the people of the nation than to those of his state, whom he believed he was sent to represent, the new senator resolved to speak, tradition or no tradition, and whatever grotesque conventions might stand in the way.

The speech delivered by Senator LaFollette on that day, and the two days succeeding, was perhaps the most thorough-going discussion of the railroad regulation problem that had so far been heard in the national capitol. Such was the general verdict of the press at the time. In its printed form it comprised 144 pages. It has justly been called a textbook upon the question. It has been in enormous demand even to this day, and is found upon the shelf of practically every member of congress or other serious student of the railroad question. The result of years of study and practical experience in legislation, it touched basic principles and pointed the way on which to proceed to obtain practical and worthwhile results. In the more thoughtful press of the time it was widely quoted and heralded as a new word upon an old subject.

But his impatient colleagues were determined to make an example of his effrontery, little realizing that by so doing the day was to be big in future results.

The new senator had spoken but a few minutes when

he found his fellow members crowding the doorways of the cloak rooms. Then it was that, quite by the way, he dropped the now historic words:

Mr. President: I pause in my remarks to say this: I cannot be wholly indifferent to the fact that senators by their absence at this time indicate their lack of interest in what I may have to say upon this subject. The public is interested. Unless this important question is rightly settled, seats now temporarily vacant may be permanently vacated by those who have the right to occupy them at this time.

In violation of the rules, the galleries applaud these daring words. Then arises Senator Kean, of New Jersey, and says:

Mr. President: I rise to a question of order. I ask that the rules of the senate be enforced, and that the galleries be cleared.

The presiding officer (Senator Long in the chair) says:

The presiding officer will admonish the occupants of the galleries that it is contrary to the rules of the senate to express approval or disapproval of any remarks that may be made, and upon a recurrence of it the galleries will be ordered cleared.

From that hour republican insurgency in congress began taking tangible form; the progressive movement in the party had received the stimulus that was to quicken it into organized individual life and therein lay the double significance of the occasion. "LaFollette talking to empty seats and applauding galleries, and Kean moving to have the galleries cleared," remarked a paper of Kean's own state at the time, "is eloquently significant. It is a prophecy and a hope of better things."

A study of the senate roll calls of the sessions immediately following is interesting. It reveals LaFollette as a lone insurgent among his party colleagues, voting independently and fearlessly, regardless of expediency, and guided only by his conceptions of the principles of justice and right. The proposition laid down in his speech upon the Hepburn bill, chief of which was that of physical valuation of railroads as a basis in rate-

making, he incorporated in amendments to that bill, and to other measures that came up, but one by one they were almost invariably voted down. Had they been adopted congress might, in some degree, at least, have been spared the long and weary time spent upon the so-called commerce court bill in the session of 1910.

The economic soundness and moral justness of the proposed amendments, however, began in time to appeal to some of his more open-minded western colleagues and finally his continued brave and consistent stand began to attract some of these senators to his banner, and thus was formed the nucleus of the organized progressive republican movement of the time.

Among the first of his colleagues to begin taking their stand with him was Senator Dolliver of Iowa, soon to close his brilliant career. Later on came Senator Cummins of the same state. From Idaho came Borah, young, brilliant, fired by high ideals; from Nebraska, Brown, an able and aggressive debater when he chose to be; from Oregon, Bourne, champion of popular rule legislation in his state; from Kansas, Bristow, a thorough democrat, unflagging foe of privilege and corruption, of tireless industry and dogmatic convictions; from Minnesota, Clapp, ponderous of build and equi-ponderant in oratory, who from education in the Badger state comprehended the Wisconsin temper and spirit.

Later on came Beveridge of Indiana, one of the ablest and most versatile men who ever sat in the senate; who had himself been previously hazed for the same sin of not sitting through a probationary period as a dummy representative of his state; and Crawford of South Dakota, a strong self-made man, who, as governor of his state, had signed a comprehensive series of reform laws that had also put his state in the front rank of progressive commonwealths.

In short, the insurgent group in the senate in 1910 included the majority of the ablest debaters and all-around

strongest men on the republican side. "The somewhat lonesome pioneer from Wisconsin," as he was characterized by Senator Dolliver, had more than vindicated another prophecy—that he would not long stand alone.

In the house a like party revolt was inevitable, following the high-handed procedure of the so-called Cannon "machine" in the passage of the Payne tariff bill. The adoption by the republican majority of the Dalzell gag resolution shutting off amendments and debate on all but a half dozen items in this bill was simply characteristic of the tyranny which the speaker and his committee on rules had developed through a long course of years, but was now to rouse more than ordinary protest in the breasts of the more independent members of the party.

Congressman Cooper of Wisconsin had often denounced and voted against this growing arrogance and power of the speaker, and Congressman Nelson of Wisconsin had made himself a marked man in his first term by agitating a curtailing of this power. The brave but futile attempt of the little band of republican insurgents to bring about this end at the opening of the special tariff session in 1909 emphasized the growing protest against machine subversion of popular government.

The insurgency of the house, like that of the senate, was western in its makeup. Naturally Congressmen Cooper, Nelson and Lenroot of Wisconsin, seasoned veterans in LaFollette's state campaigns, became influential factors in it. Norris of Nebraska identified himself with it and was to have the peculiar distinction of leading the fight that finally led to the unhorsing of Speaker Cannon in March, 1910. A militant recruit to the cause immediately on his entrance in the house was Poindexter of the state of Washington, who, although Virginia-bred, had thoroughly absorbed the spirit of his new home. Murdock, representing the independent Kansas temper; Davis, Lindbergh and Volstead of Minnesota; Cary,

Morse and Kopp of Wisconsin; Hubbard, Haugen and Kendall of Iowa, and Hayes of California were others active in the house movement.

These members reflected the sentiment that was springing up in their respective sections. The extent to which the idea of revolt had seized upon the popular mind was strikingly shown in the elections of 1910 whereby dozens of "standpat" senators and congressmen of both parties, many of great prominence, were retired to private life, most of them being succeeded by "progressives."

The inspiration of the movement was a fresh consciousness of the necessity of curbing the dangerous and growing tendencies toward industrial and commercial despotism on the part of organized wealth; a new realization of the justice of the age-long demand for equal opportunities to all, and a determination to insist on its more general observance.

Again, as in many instances in the past, this conviction was to be translated from mere academic acceptance into action, and again, as in the time of Lincoln, the hope of its assertion in red-blooded practical form was to lie in the virile west. The east, with its more settled order, its reverence for property and established things, would naturally be slow to respond to the new movement, as would the almost equally tory south, blinded by its twin delusions of states' rights and negro domination, its preference of combating the phantoms of the past to fighting the dragons of the present.

"All through American history," says Prof. E. A. Ross, "democracy has been like a tradewind, blowing ever from the sunset. The young states of the Ohio valley led in multiplying the number of elective offices, in introducing rapid rotation in office, in submitting state constitutions to popular ratification. Class bulwarks of colonial date were thus pounded to pieces by the surf of democratic sentiment from the west; Jeffersonian and

Jacksonian democracy, Lincoln republicanism, Grangerism, populism, Bryan democracy, Roosevelt republicanism—wave after wave has rolled seaward, loosing the east from its Old World, or first family, or 'best people' moorings."

Restoration of popular rule, a return to the principles and practices that were designed to mark the government in its beginning, was the simple creed of the movement. The expression by the new progressive pioneers of this sentiment, and of the imperative necessity of action, while varied in form, was of the same general tenor.

Thus on his second election to the United States senate, Senator LaFollette said:

We are slow to realize that democracy is a life; and involves continual struggle. It is only as those of every generation who love democracy resist with all their might the encroachments of its enemies that the ideals of representative government can even be nearly approximated.

The essence of the progressive movement, as I see it, lies in its struggle to uphold the fundamental principles of representative government. It expresses the hopes and desires of millions of common men and women who are willing to fight for their ideals, to take defeat, if necessary, and still go on fighting.

This composite judgment is always safer and wiser and stronger and more unselfish than the judgment of any one individual mind. The people have never failed in any great crisis in our history. The real danger to democracy lies not in the ignorance or want of patriotism in the people, but in the corrupting influence of powerful business organizations upon the representatives of the people. The real cure for the ills of democracy is more democracy.

Said Woodrow Wilson, then governor of New Jersey:

It is part of the new meaning of government, therefore, that its resources are not to be put at the disposal of the governing class, or of any limited set of governing influences; but that those who exercise its authority must "keep house" for the whole people. The reason we want our government to be free from every kind of private or narrow control is that we want to have it see more things than it would see if it served only a few. Those who con-

duct it ought to have the vision of the nation itself—ought to be sensitive to impulses from every quarter.

Again, in an interview, Governor Wilson said:

What policies characterize progressive democracy? All those policies whose object is to wrest government from the control of special groups of men, and restore it to the country. All the policies that re-establish the connection between representatives and the people. All well-considered measures that will tend to re-establish general opportunity and freedom of enterprise.

Judge Ben B. Lindsey of Colorado predicted great coming changes, saying:

The work has only begun; we are changing our forms of government; we are making it more simple. We are taking away the chance of confusion; but most of all we are putting that power directly into the hands of all the people to bring about a reign of real democracy.

No man who is not ready to grant to every other man all that he demands for himself, whether in political power or in opportunity, has any place in this great struggle. No man who is unwilling to trust all the people all the time with any question can survive in this great bloodless revolution that is now transforming the nation.

Senator Jonathan Bourne of Oregon, in his famous speech in the United States senate on Oregon, May 5, 1910, said:

There are doubtless some people who honestly believe that the people as a whole have not reached the stage of development qualifying them individually to participate in government. Others whom I credit with the intelligence which I have seen manifested by them in other directions assert the inability of the people to govern themselves as an excuse rather than a conviction; but I, Mr. President, from thirty years' experience in practical politics, am absolutely convinced not only that the people are fully capable of governing themselves, but that they are decidedly the best judges as to those individually to whom they shall delegate the truly representative power.

Writing in the *American Magazine*, William Allen White of Kansas said:

That there is a well defined feeling in our hearts manifest in our private charities and our public utterances in conventions and

legislatures that society is not doing its duty toward those who do the world's work, no one who heeds public sentiment can doubt. This sentiment is growing. It is behind the so-called progressive movement in our politics—giving it moral impetus. When that sentiment hardens and becomes the set and fixed expression of the American people government will respond to it, for neither courts nor constitutions can stand before public sentiment.

Even in the universities this sentiment of unrest was noted and given expression. Speaking on the subject of "The Spirit of a University," President Charles R. Van Hise of the University of Wisconsin said:

As of old, so today, the spirit of the university is in irreconcilable conflict with those who hold that the present state of affairs is the best possible, who believe that existing conventions, morals, political and religious faith, are fixed. All are fluid. For one nation they are not the same as for another. For each nation they are modified from generation to generation. This will continue so long as the race endures. In the university, one of the chief functions of which is to inquire, ever to adjust, ever to improve, ever to advance knowledge, the flux is greatest, the progress most rapid; and therefore these institutions are the very centers of disturbance.

Naturally William J. Bryan was in sympathy with the movement. Speaking before the Ohio constitutional convention somewhat later he said:

The initiative and referendum do not overthrow representative government—they have not come to destroy but to fulfill. The purpose of representative government is to represent, and that purpose fails when representatives misrepresent their constituents. Experience has shown that the defects of our government are not in the people themselves, but in those who, acting as representatives of the people, embezzle power and turn to their own advantage the authority given them for the advancement of the public welfare. It has cost centuries to secure popular government—the blood of millions of the best and the bravest has been poured out to establish the doctrine that governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed.

All this struggle, all this sacrifice, has been in vain if, when we secure a representative government, the people's representatives can betray them with impunity and mock their constituents while they draw salaries from the public treasury.

Prof. E. A. Ross of the University of Wisconsin, in an article in the *Century Magazine*, said :

It is this affrighting vision of monopoly that explains the iron determination of the people to get a firmer grip on their government. It is true, as witness Oregon, that when they get direct legislation they do nothing radical with it; but they are thinking of the future, like a prudent traveler who looks to his shooting irons before setting out through a country infested by brigands.

The reascension of democracy has been prompted not by seditious intent, popular self conceit, or the seduction of strange doctrines, but by prudence. Bitter experience has taught the people that the secret rule of certain kinds of property or certain kinds of business through the party machines mean things abominable—predatory vice, private monopoly, the wasting of natural wealth, overworked children and women, industrial oppression.

Said George L. Record of New Jersey at the national conference of progressive republicans in Chicago, in October, 1911 :

Because men are gradually becoming more conscious that some men are getting something for nothing—because they are becoming conscious that a few people, in piling up enormous fortunes, are taking advantage of conditions which, morally, are unsound and not to be justified—for that reason we are here.

Speaking before the American Institute of Criminal Law and Criminology Chief Justice J. B. Winslow of Wisconsin said :

The democracies which are coming propose to place both legislative and executive power directly in the hands of the people or under their immediate control, so far as that may be possible. The democracies of the past have limited the electorate to male citizens; the democracies which are coming will without doubt welcome to the electorate female citizens on equal terms, not as a privilege, but as a means of eternal justice and right.

The direct primary, the initiative and referendum, the recall, the equal suffrage movement, the election of United States senators by popular vote, the presidential preference primary—all these movements, whether yet adopted or only agitated, are simply manifestations of the overwhelming democratic spirit of the time.

How are we to make sure of that high quality of citizenship which will be necessary in such a democracy as we shall have?

This question is probably not capable of an authoritative answer in a single word, nor shall I attempt to give one, but the word which the moving finger of progress is today writing is the word "*Service.*"

For centuries individualism has been the keynote of civilization, especially in this land which has boasted so loudly of its freedom and equality. We have gloried in the idea that every man was the master of his own destiny and must fight his battle alone; we have seen the struggle for wealth and social distinction—nay even for the necessities of life—become fiercer and fiercer, and we have condoned the ruthless cruelty and selfishness of it all on the ground that all citizens have equal opportunities and that the triumph of the strong and the trampling down of the weak is but the working of nature's immutable and righteous law.

But the consciousness that man cannot live for himself alone has come at last; the public conscience is awake; we now for the first time realize faintly and imperfectly the marvelous significance of the parable of the good Samaritan. We are learning who are our neighbors and we are realizing that an injury to one of the least of these is an injury to society as a whole.

It was an opportune time for the launching of a new movement. The sixty-first congress, then passing out of existence, had manifested a most stubborn and apparently wilful disinclination to meet the demands of the hour. It was this congress which, with the aid of a pliant president, had enacted the repugnant Payne-Aldrich tariff law; which had, in effect, placed the seal of approval upon bribery by retaining Senator Lorimer in his seat; which by "whitewashing" Secretary Ballinger had condoned his acquiescence in the bold designs of the Morgan-Guggenheim syndicate upon the resources of Alaska; which had voted down the amendment for the popular election of United States senators; which had long resisted giving Arizona statehood because of its progressive constitution, and which had tried hard to weaken the Sherman anti-trust law in favor of the railroads and succeeded, in spite of the gallant fight of its progressive members, in setting up the commerce court

between the interstate commerce commission and the people. If charity spare this congress the characterization of "infamous," history can scarcely fail to ascribe to its leaders that lack of vision proverbially attributed to those whom the gods would destroy.

As a cause, however, the progressive movement in the republican party was formless, sporadic and unrelated in its various activities until taken in hand by the organizing genius of LaFollette, who soon had its largely undirected enthusiasm turned into effective channels.

After a number of preliminary meetings at the home of Senator LaFollette, 1864 Wyoming avenue, Washington, the National Progressive Republican League was formed January 21, 1911. It is not too much to say then that in this house was formed the nucleus of what was to be the new progressive party of a year later.

The league promulgated a simple platform, the substance of which was contained in its first declaration: "The object of the league is the promotion of popular government and progressive legislation." To that end it set forth as its objects, and pledged to aid wherever it could, legislation looking toward the direct election of United States senators, direct primaries in the election of all public officials, presidential preference primaries, the initiative, referendum and recall and corrupt practices laws.

While the platform was silent on this point, it was denied by its members that the purpose of the league was to advance or oppose the personal fortunes of candidates. Nevertheless it was an open secret that many of the prime movers in the organization of the league were primarily interested, whether selfishly or otherwise, in the man rather than the cause, and felt intuitively that one moral effect of the movement would be to further the prestige of its real leader, Senator LaFollette. It were safe to assume also that back of some of its mem-

bers the impelling motive was a desire to inflict vengeance on President Taft for supposed injuries; of others the hope of more speedy preference through new authority. However, that Senator LaFollette might have a free hand in pending legislation, and to disarm the charge which might otherwise be made that the real purpose of the league was to advance his presidential candidacy, the Wisconsin senator was not made an officer of the league nor placed upon any of its committees. The following were elected officers of the league:

President—Senator Jonathan Bourne, Jr., Oregon.

First Vice President—Representative George W. Norris, Nebraska.

Second Vice President—Governor Chase S. Osborn, Michigan.

Treasurer—Charles R. Crane, Chicago.

Executive Committee—Senator Moses E. Clapp of Minnesota, Senator Joseph L. Bristow of Kansas, Representative E. H. Hubbard of Iowa, Representative Irvine L. Lenroot of Wisconsin, Representative-elect William Kent of California, Gifford Pinchot of Pennsylvania, George L. Record of New Jersey, and the president, vice presidents and treasurer, members ex-officio.

The following United States senators were among the original signers: Jonathan Bourne, Jr., of Oregon, Albert J. Beveridge of Indiana, Joseph L. Bristow of Kansas, Norris Brown of Nebraska, Albert B. Cummins of Iowa, Moses E. Clapp of Minnesota, Joseph M. Dixon of Montana, A. J. Gronna of North Dakota, Robert M. LaFollette of Wisconsin. State governors among the first signers were: Chester H. Aldrich of Nebraska, Joseph M. Carey of Wyoming, Hiram W. Johnson of California, Francis E. McGovern of Wisconsin, Chase S. Osborn of Michigan and W. R. Stubbs of Kansas.

Members of congress to be allied with the league were: Henry Allen Cooper, William J. Cary, John M. Nelson,

Irvine L. Lenroot and E. A. Morse of Wisconsin; C. R. Davis and C. A. Lindbergh of Minnesota; E. H. Hubbard and G. N. Haugen of Iowa; Victor Murdock and E. H. Madison of Kansas; George W. Norris of Nebraska, and Miles Poindexter of Washington. Other signers were Alfred L. Baker of Illinois, Ray Stannard Baker and Louis D. Brandeis of Massachusetts, Chas. R. Crane of Illinois, Frank L. Dingley of Maine, James R. Garfield of Ohio, Hugh T. Halbert, George S. Loftus and James A. Peterson of Minnesota, Francis J. Heney of California, Fred S. Jackson (congressman-elect) of Kansas, William Kent (congressman-elect) of California, William L. LaFollette (congressman-elect) of Washington, Gifford Pinchot of Pennsylvania, Amos Pinchot, Clarence Jones, Frederic C. Howe and Gilbert E. Roe of New York, W. S. U'Ren of Oregon, Merle D. Vincent of Colorado and William Allen White of Kansas.

Former President Roosevelt was early visited by a delegation from the league and invited to join, but cautiously declined to do so, giving as his reason "that it might develop that he could be of better service to the progressive cause as a free lance."

Senator LaFollette was generally recognized throughout the country as the accepted leader of the new cause. Sketches, studies and portraits of him filled the newspapers and magazines even to far-off Australia. He was deluged with congratulatory letters conveying appreciation and affection, literally tens of thousands of them being added to his already great wealth of similar testimonials—a wealth to appal the future compiler and historian. Indeed the measure of fame and affection contained in these letters might well lead any recipient to contemplate with composure the denial of any further favor of fortune. One correspondent, for instance, among the thousands, a minister by the way, wrote:

"In some ways this battle for political and commercial righteousness is more important than the battle under Lincoln for union and freedom. Fight! There must be no quarter in this contest. Save the union if the party is lost! Keep your plume white and as in the past stand for righteousness at any cost. My blood thrills at the opportunity you and those with you have of opening the way for the people's escape, and I like to think of you as prophets of God sent for the deliverance of the people and to furnish an example to all nations of heroic faith."

Congressman A. J. Gronna of North Dakota happily reflected the sentiment of these professions of admiration and devotion when he said: "Senator LaFollette is the most popular man in North Dakota; but as we cannot elect him United States senator there I have decided to seek the senatorship myself and to enroll myself under his banner."

Designed primarily, but not exclusively, to be confined in its aims within the republican party—as LaFollette's similar organization in Wisconsin had been—the new movement spread with great rapidity, and indications were that it was in a fair way soon to have taken over the principal machinery of the party, when it was diverted in large portion by the Roosevelt movement away from the old organization it was designed to reform.

It may be here cited as a double irony of fortune that not only was the new movement to be thus diverted from its most constructive and promising leader, but the platform of the new progressive party was likewise to be largely drawn by Wisconsin hands and along lines which the legislation and education inspired by the LaFollette movement in his own state had shown to be most practical, and in accord with the spirit of the times.

CHAPTER II

Granger Legislation in Wisconsin.

EXPLOITATION OF RESOURCES OF STATE—RAILROAD AND LUMBER INTERESTS ACTIVE IN POLITICS—POTTER LAW FIRST STRONG ATTEMPT AT RAILROAD REGULATION—GOV. TAYLOR'S GREAT FIGHT—CELEBRATED COURT DECISION—POTTER LAW REPEALED AND RAILROADS REGAIN POWER.

IT may well be doubted whether the political movement now known everywhere as progressive republicanism could have been successfully inaugurated if it had not been for the long and desperate struggle to secure for the people the right to participate directly in the choice of candidates and to control the policy of political parties in states like Wisconsin and Iowa.

In Wisconsin a young man, born upon a farm near the capital of the state, educated in the public schools and in the state university, trained in the profession of the law, gifted as an orator, with a natural aptitude for the public service, and, above all, endowed with a courageous heart and a genius for labor and research, awoke to the fact that the whole political life of the state had become a mere agency of great business corporations, many of them non-residents, and that no man, however qualified to serve the community, had any chance to do so without an alliance with the political machine which they controlled. The situation was intolerable to this eager student of popular institutions. It appeared to him to forecast the end, if not of our form of government, at least of its spirit and substance.

There are few chapters in our political history more instructive than the record of this man's activities during the years following. He dealt with the stern realities of their case. He demanded the reform of the ancient system of nominations by caucus and the substitution of the direct primary. He brought the great railway systems doing business within the state, together with their attorneys and other dependents, to the bar of public opinion for judgment; and while bribery and the hardly less odious corruption of railway favors defeated him in the next state convention, he kept up the fight, enlisting under his standard thoughtful and intelligent citizens, and especially the young men, until at length he overpowered the oligarchy which for forty years had

handed out the honors of a great political party with the compliments of the private interests which directed the government of the state.—United States Senator J. P. Dolliver in *The Outlook*, 1910.

In the great commercial expansion following the civil war and the deadening of sensibilities resulting from that cruel episode, it was natural that corruption and dishonesty in our political and commercial life should appear. All hasty growth has in it the elements of danger and decay. All were glad to have the great and destructive struggle ended and eager to return to peaceful pursuits. The generally disorganized condition of society and affairs naturally presented many openings for the unscrupulous and greedy, many short cuts to wealth and power which the bold and designing were quick to seize. And so great was the reaction of relief that the few protests now and then raised at prevailing practices too often fell upon an unresponsive public ear. There was little disposition to be critical. The blundering and lamentable policy pursued toward the south following the death of Lincoln tended also to keep alive the fires of sectional hatred and a feeling of apprehension, a fact which further served to confuse the public mind with reference to issues really vital and which designing politicians were not slow to turn to their advantage. Too often all that was necessary in order to direct attention from scandals was to wave the "bloody shirt" and invoke party loyalty to lay the bogie of another southern uprising.

It mattered not that the south was completely prostrate; the spectre of rebellion was industriously conjured up and exorcised. Even the credit mobilier and other railroad scandals of the Grant administrations, by which Blaine and so many other public men became tainted, were not sufficient to inspire any substantial moral and political revulsion. The tremendous prestige given the republican party through its successful prosecution of

the Civil war and the abolition of slavery, coupled with the utter incapacity of democratic leadership to combat it, afforded a security to men in power most dangerous to the public good and invited irregularity and corruption. The giving of land grants and other concessions with a lavish hand, the carrying of elections by money and violence, the awarding of extortionate contracts, and the creation of innumerable new offices were features of legislation and administration.

As in national, so in state affairs; the same conditions were reflected. The great natural resources of the commonwealths, for instance, were permitted to be exploited by lavish hands. In Wisconsin the exposure of the railroad bond scandal of the Barstow administration had operated to prevent a repetition of like coarse transactions, but the practical gifts of great tracts of public domain to railroads and lumber interests went merrily forward.

An inevitable result of this policy was the building up of families and corporations of great wealth, who realizing that the sources of their fortunes and power lay in the political machinery of the commonwealth were jealous to retain their control over such machinery. The lumbering and railroad interests were naturally the first to develop great power and influence in the state. From the beginning of the state's settlement, as has been the history of practically all pioneer communities, the partnership of politics and big business had been cementing, the lumber interests and the railroads dividing up the legislative and administrative offices among themselves and the lesser interests.

At first all legislation of this era was in the direction of the exploitation of natural resources under the claim of creating opportunity and increasing population. Lands—even those of the schools and the university—were given away to railroads or sold to individuals at

such nominal rates that often a single tree alone was worth ten times the price of the acre on which it grew. Water power and public utility franchises were granted lavishly with no regard to state or municipal rights or the interests of the future. There was a rush for the spoil, as it were, all along the line. Everywhere the cry seemed to be, "Here's opportunity; jump in!"

As time went on and opportunity became more and more circumscribed the tendency was to intrench big property and to gradually close the door on the general public. Hence much of the legislation of this period was either directly in favor of monopoly or contained "jokers" making harmless to corporations laws which seemed designed in the general interest. To effect these ends it required gradually finer, smoother and abler bosses and lobbyists, and centralization of management, until in later years legislative operations were found to be largely influenced by a big municipal boss of Milwaukee, with the state chairmen of the two great political parties as his principal lieutenants, a trio whose union was bound the more securely by a "division of spoils" which gave each the headship of one of the three principal public utility monopolies of the metropolis.

Naturally with the falling off of the forests, the lumbering industry could not be expected to maintain its prestige. With the railroads it was another story; they would grow in wealth and power, and the consciousness of this fact naturally gave thoughtful people pause and turned their minds to the necessity ultimately of some regulation of the agency so useful in the public service and so necessary in the development of a new country, but which had in it possibilities of greatest menace if not administered on the lines of strictest justice to all the people.

It was said to have been the boast of the railroads that no legislation unfavorable to them had been enacted for

years and that none could be enacted in Wisconsin. And this doubtless was the feeling of the great mass of the people of the state as well. The proposition of railroad regulation, for instance, required years of education before it took root in their minds as a practical possibility. Forgetting the fact that the railroads derived their franchises from the state and were answerable to it for their conduct, the common people had come to regard them with an awe that bordered almost upon superstition. They were practically held to be unassailable institutions. Their rights were supposed to be superior, not only to the individual, but to the whole public. If they chose to ride roughshod over private property in laying out their lines it was regarded as futile to question their right or think of redress. They were greater than the state; they could do no wrong; all apparent injustices, the discriminations in freight, the destruction of one town for the upbuilding of another; the arrogance of self-sufficient service, must have their justification somewhere; must in some scheme incomprehensible to the lay mind redound to the general good. The theory that the state could grapple with these mighty interests; that it had any business to, was regarded by many as a Quixotic dream, while the idea that anyone outside of a railroad office could fathom or comprehend their extensive business, their methods of operation, their technicalities of bookkeeping, was regarded as the grossest presumption. An air of profound mystery surrounded the business and made the task which later administrations proposed assume mountain proportions.

The first serious effort at anything like thoroughgoing regulation of the railroads came with the historic granger movement and the advent of the Taylor administration in 1874. This movement—brief and unique as it proved—was to be most significant to the state and nation and has been styled “the unwritten chapter in the so-called story of Wisconsin.”

Although from the time of the close of the civil war the governors of Wisconsin, in their messages to the legislatures, had called attention to the complaints of the people over the oppression of the railroads, it remained for Governor Taylor to take up the question of regulation with a vigorous hand. Following the presentation of his message, a strong and unusual paper for the time and in which he pronounced against discriminations, free passes, combinations of parallel lines and other abuses, the legislature enacted in the face of a powerful lobby, the so-called "Potter law," which limited passenger rates, classified freight and regulated prices for its transportation, and provided for a railroad commission of three members.

A tremendous protest went up from the railroads, and the press under their influence, at this act. On April 29, 1874, the very day after the law went into effect, formal notices were served on Governor Taylor in the executive office itself by Alexander Mitchell, president of the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul railroad, and Albert Keep of the Chicago & Northwestern company, that their roads would "disregard so much of the law as attempts to fix an arbitrary rate of compensation for freight and passengers."

This unparalleled arrogance of the officials of these great corporations created a profound sensation. Governor Taylor promptly issued a proclamation, invoking the aid of all good citizens, and announcing that he would employ the full power of the state to enforce compliance with the law.

Proceedings were also begun in the supreme court to annul the charters of the railroads should they persist in their course, and injunctions were asked to restrain the companies from disobeying the law. In the litigation following the state found itself confronted with an array of legal representatives from the standpoint of

ability and reputation never before matched in its history, including such men as W. M. Evarts and Charles O'Connor of New York, E. Rockwell Hoar and Benjamin R. Curtis of Massachusetts. The contest attracted the attention of the entire nation. Upon the result in Wisconsin depended the vitality of much similar legislation in neighboring states and Governor Taylor and his associate representatives of state authority were thus compelled to bear the brunt of a controversy of national extent and consequence. The contention extended to both state and federal courts; the main question involved being the constitutional power of the state over corporations of its own creation.

In an opinion of great length and remarkable power, written by Chief Justice Edward G. Ryan, whom Governor Taylor had recently appointed, the state was on September 25 that year granted the injunction sought. On the subject of corporation regulation Chief Justice Ryan said:

"It comports with the dignity and safety of the state that the franchises of corporations should be subject to the power that grants them, that corporations should exist as the subordinates of the state which is their creator."

In all respects the state was fully sustained in its position and ultimately judgments were rendered against the corporations in all the state and federal courts, including the supreme court of the United States, establishing finally the complete and absolute power of the people, through the legislature, to modify or altogether repeal the charters of corporations.

But, although beaten in the courts, the railroads had another recourse for retrieving their losses and making a mockery of the people's will. The defeat of Governor Taylor was decreed and that official, bravely as he had stood for the people and the laws, was subjected to un-

measured ridicule and abuse by a large proportion of the press of the state, then so mightily influenced by the railroads through the potency of the pass and other favors which also Governor Taylor had declared against.

Enormous sums of money were spent to influence public opinion. Stories were invented that Governor Taylor had sought with paltry sums to bribe members of the legislature to support his legislation and in derisive reference to one such alleged attempt he was called "Ten-Dollar Bill." The same course was pursued toward the other officials who took a stand with Governor Taylor. United States Senator Matt H. Carpenter, who gave an opinion fully sustaining the Potter law long before the supreme court decision came down, was unmercifully denounced as "Matt, the Robber," "the American Karl Marx," etc.

To frighten the people and embarrass the administration, the railroads stopped work on the lines they were building and otherwise curtailed their activities.

The desired effect was obtained. A sort of panic seized upon the people. The result of all this was that Governor Taylor was defeated by a narrow vote, he alone of his ticket being beaten. The next legislature repealed the Potter law, notwithstanding that it had been sustained in all the courts, and the railways thus again established their supremacy.

Not only was Governor Taylor subjected to the humiliation of a lone defeat for daring to stand firm for popular rights, but insult was added to injury. In a succeeding legislature a resolution was derisively adopted requesting him to bring back an old wall map of the state which had hung in the executive office and which he had taken with him to his farm home near Madison. Here was irony, indeed, and refinement of persecution, asking the fallen champion who had sought to save the people their millions to return an old wall

map. To Governor Taylor's credit, be it said, he shamed his mockers by himself walking into the executive office and returning the map in person.

It is an eloquent commentary on the conditions then prevailing that the railroads were thus able to snatch a victory out of the very jaws of defeat. The easy and blind relinquishment by the people of a victory complete at every point proved anew the great power the railroads and other big interests had acquired and pointed the moral that follows from temporizing or compromising once the victory has been won.

It had its other lessons, one of which was the necessity of wise leadership, and the importance of avoiding mistakes to retard or set back a movement once undertaken. Governor Taylor was a strong man for his time. He had certain excellent qualities, stubborn honesty and high courage, but lacked in the best qualities of leadership and had other limitations that kept men from him. He had not the genius to fuse the variant, disorganized support he first received into an effective fighting machine, nor had he the constructive ability later so strikingly shown by LaFollette in a similar situation in building his reforms wisely and well upon basic essentials. So, while he fought his good fight to victory, he was unable to make secure its fruits, and the "anti-railroad" movement suffered such a repudiation and setback that it took thirty years to regain the ground he had won—and lost.

Governor Taylor was destined to outlive his brief eminence for three decades, and, ere he died friendless and alone in a charitable institution, was to witness the final vindication of his course and the practical and effective application of the principles he had helped to establish. This was finally to come with the advent of the LaFollette movement.

CHAPTER III

The LaFollette-Sawyer Incident.

SENSATIONAL BREAK DESTINED TO HAVE IMPORTANT LATER RESULTS—STATEMENTS OF SAWYER AND LAFOLLETTE AS TO CAUSE OF TROUBLE.

ONE day in the fall of 1891 the people of the state were startled to learn that Judge R. G. Siebecker of Madison had announced that because of matters that had come to his attention he could not try the so-called treasury cases which were scheduled to come before him.

The purpose of this work is to consider but a decade of the political history of the state, the period inclusive of the LaFollette agitations and administrations, but as an incident leading up to this action by the court had a profound influence and bearing on the man and the movement that followed it can scarcely be disregarded in anything like a comprehensive survey of the period.

Marking the practical entry of LaFollette into state politics, and involving as it did also a number of figures later to become prominent in the great factional strife, it was of more than passing significance. This incident was the break between United States Senator Philetus Sawyer of Oshkosh and Mr. LaFollette.

Through a political blunder of the republican legislature in enacting the so-called Bennett school law, which aroused the resentment of the foreign-born elements of the state, the democrats had slipped into power in 1890. Anxious to make a record for efficiency before the people, and at the same time embarrass the opposition party, the democratic administration through Attorney General O'Connor brought suit against the former republican

state treasurers and their bondsmen for interest on state moneys for twenty years back, which in the easy practices of the times the treasurers had been loaning out to favored individuals and corporations and retaining the interest.

As the bondsmen of former Treasurers H. B. Harshaw, E. C. McFetridge and others, Senator Sawyer, Chas. F. Pfister and other members of the old republican organization would be liable for large sums were the state to win the cases. So much in a preliminary way.

The Siebecker announcement caused a sensation. Instinctively the public concluded some tampering had been attempted with the wheels of justice. But Siebecker refused to talk. Attempts to get him to declare specifically the innocence of certain interested parties, that through the process of elimination the truth might be thus ascertained, all failed.

The newspapers began speculating. October 25 the *Chicago Times* printed a startling story suggesting the probability of attempted bribery in the Wisconsin case and stating that were such found to be the fact the prison doors of Wisconsin might yawn for some people of prominence. Two days later a prepared interview from Senator Sawyer was printed in the *Milwaukee Sentinel* and the big mystery which had agitated legal and political circles was lifted.

The influence or motive that inspired Sawyer to give out the interview and the merits of the quarrel between the two men have been subjects of much controversy and will continue to be as long as any interest is taken in the case. For the benefit of the present day reader who may have such interest the Sawyer interview and the one by LaFollette which followed are herewith reproduced. The Sawyer statement follows:

Some time about the 20th or 25th of September, Mr. Harshaw and his attorney, Mr. Felker, asked me if I would not see Mr. La-

Follotte for them and said that they would like to engage me in looking up certain documents and to attend to certain matters in the treasury cases at Madison. They also wanted to learn from Mr. LaFollette whether Judge Siebecker was prejudiced against Mr. Harshaw on account of the latter's opposition to his (Siebecker's) appointment as judge. I was coming to Milwaukee to the state fair and I telegraphed Mr. LaFollette, asking him if he would meet me there. He answered that he would. I saw him at the Plankinton house and told him what Mr. Harshaw and Mr. Felker asked me to do, and for them I offered him a retainer of \$500, but no money was paid. I told him they wanted him to look up certain records and documents at Madison. I also told him they were anxious to learn whether Judge Siebecker had any prejudice against Mr. Harshaw for the reason above. Mr. LaFollette said that Judge Siebecker was a fair-minded man; that he had talked with him on the subject and that he was sure that the judge would not let the fact that Harshaw had opposed his appointment have any weight with him in the treasury suit. I told Mr. LaFollette that was all I cared to know on that subject, that he had given me all the information I wanted. But Mr. LaFollette said he thought it would not be advisable for him to take a retainer, as Judge Siebecker was his brother-in-law. I then said to him that I agreed with him, that it was not proper and it was the first I knew that they were brothers-in-law. I told him that if he was employed an improper construction might be put upon it and that therefore he was right in thinking it unadvisable to appear in the cases. If I had known he was a brother-in-law of Judge Siebecker's I wouldn't have proposed it.

I can't believe that Mr. LaFollette has put any improper interpretation upon my conversation with him. If he has he has certainly misunderstood me or misconstrued what I said. At the time of the conversation he certainly made no such intimation to me, nor can I believe that anything I said to Mr. LaFollette could be construed to mean that I sought through him to influence the action of the court. Such a thing never entered my mind. It is impossible also for me to think that my conversation with Mr. LaFollette is the basis of Judge Siebecker's refusal to sit in the case. I think there must be something else, for there certainly was nothing in the conversation I have referred to that was not perfectly proper.

LaFollette felt that Sawyer's dismissal of the matter that had startled the whole state called for a statement

from him. The implied charge by Sawyer's friends of megalomania in LaFollette if left unchallenged would leave him (LaFollette) ridiculous. It was a critical moment. If he disputed Sawyer's explanation it meant war; and, further, if not complete, ostracism by the ruling party powers; misunderstanding and the estrangement of many friends. He announced his intention of replying to Sawyer. His friends, however, demurred at this. Nevertheless, he prepared his reply and took it to Horace Rublee, editor of the *Sentinel*. Rublee also advised him of the gravity of the act, not only to himself (LaFollette) and to Sawyer, but to the party, and called in his friend, Judge Dyer, attorney for the Northwestern Life Insurance company. After hearing the interview, Dyer is reported to have said:

This is one of the saddest moments of my life. Sawyer has been an old friend of mine; he brought about my appointment to the federal bench. This will mean a split in the republican party in Wisconsin. It will mean ostracism for Mr. LaFollette. But (turning to Rublee) you must print the interview.

The interview was printed. It read as follows:

To the Editor of the *Milwaukee Sentinel*:

Madison, Wis., Oct. 28.—The publication of an interview with Senator Sawyer in the *Sentinel* of yesterday was first seen by me in Milwaukee shortly after my arrival in the city upon business early yesterday morning. The interview purported to make public a conversation which occurred at the Plankinton house in Milwaukee on Thursday, September 17, between Senator Sawyer and myself concerning my employment as an attorney in the case of the State of Wisconsin against H. B. Harshaw, Philetus Sawyer and others. After reading the interview and before leaving the city I ascertained that the statement was authorized by Senator Sawyer.

The interview was a false one, and not a true statement of what transpired and I can not remain silent and permit it to stand uncontradicted. Today I requested Judge Siebecker's sanction to speak and received it. After his announcement in declining to try the case, I felt bound in courtesy as an attorney and officer of his court to respect his judgment that a trial should first be

had. But the conversation as Senator Sawyer details it, leaves me no choice but to declare the facts at this time and in this manner.

On Tuesday morning, September 15 last, I received a letter from Senator Sawyer of which the following is a copy:

“Dictated:

“Oshkosh, Wis., Sept. 14, 1891.—Hon. Robert M. LaFollette, Madison, Wisconsin. My Dear LaFollette: I will be in Milwaukee at the state fair on Thursday. I have some matters of importance that I would like to consult you about that escaped my memory yesterday. If convenient can you be in Milwaukee on that day and meet me at the Plankinton house at 11 o'clock A. M.? If not on that day what day would suit your convenience this week? Please answer by telegraph. All you need to say if you can meet me that day is merely telegraph me ‘Yes.’ If not, simply mention day you can meet me. Yours truly,

“PHILETUS SAWYER.”

The letter was typewritten upon a single page of office paper, letter size. The top part of the sheet was torn off, leaving only the printed words, “Dictated, Oshkosh, Wis.” The reference in the letter to Mr. Sawyer’s having seen me the day before it was written related to our having met on Sunday, the 13th of September, at Neenah, Wis., on the occasion of the funeral of Hon. Chas. B. Clark. At that time I met Mr. Sawyer between one and two o'clock just as we took a carriage, together with Hon. N. D. Fratt and Hon. L. B. Caswell, to go from the hotel to the residence of Mr. Clark. From the residence we went immediately after the services at the house, by the same conveyance to the cemetery, and on the return Mr. Sawyer left us at the depot to take the train for Oshkosh.

Late in the afternoon of the day upon which I received the letter I wired to Sawyer, “Yes,” and on Thursday went to Milwaukee and found him awaiting me at the Plankinton house.

He said: “I have no room; could not get one; they are so crowded, but come up to the parlor. I think we can talk there.” I went with him to the parlor on the second floor. It is a large room. There were two or three occupants sitting near the entrance when we went in. I did not observe them afterward, but believe there was no one in the room but Mr. Sawyer when I left it. When we entered he led the way to the corner of the room most remote from the entrance, where we sat down near each other. He began by saying: “I have put you to some trouble and ex-

pense to meet me here, Mr. LaFollette, but I wanted to see you bad."

I replied: "It is a matter of no consequence."

He said: "I asked you to come here because I want to talk with you about Siebecker and the treasury matter. Harshaw has made such a fool of himself in the newspapers and besides that he opposed the appointment of Siebecker as judge."

I interrupted to say: "There is not the slightest reason to give that a thought." The newspaper interview in which Harshaw said that Siebecker was the only judge in the state that he would not be willing to have decide his case, was published some time before any case was commenced, prior to the service of any papers. I said to Siebecker: "I think Harshaw was not himself when that interview was published, and if he was it was probably due to some irritation which existed in his mind toward me at about that time owing to the removal of one of his friends from office on my recommendation and his remembrance of our relationship in that connection. Of course, it will make no impression upon you." Siebecker said: "Certainly not. I never knew Colonel Harshaw personally in my life and there is no reason why I should pay any attention whatever to such a printed statement." That is the only conversation I have had with Siebecker in reference to these cases or anything connected with them. As to Harshaw's opposing his appointment as judge, I never heard of it and don't believe Siebecker ever did and it would make no difference to him anyway. He is not that kind of a man."

Mr. Sawyer replied: "Well, he did oppose his appointment. Of course, I did not know whether Siebecker knew it or not. I don't know Siebecker, don't think I ever saw him in my life. But I want to know what kind of a man he is."

"Well, Mr. Sawyer," I said, "you know Judge Siebecker is my brother-in-law, that he was formerly my law partner and you are likely to get a somewhat biased opinion from me; but I will try to say for him only what I think any attorney of Madison would say. He is a young man but a strong lawyer. He has had but a limited experience as judge. Since he has been on the bench he has made some mistakes, maybe more than his share, but I think not. He is a close student and does lots of hard work on his cases. He is a liberal-minded man, has a judicial temperament, and it is impossible for him to be a partisan politically or otherwise and everyone who knows him will tell you that he is an honest man. Now I don't believe there is a man at the bar in

Madison, Judge Pinney, who I believe is one of your attorneys, or anyone else, who wouldn't say as much as that of him."

Mr. Sawyer said: "Pinney was employed by us to give an opinion in the case but I knew you would know all about Siebecker and I wanted to see you about him. These cases are awful important to us in the state and we can not afford to lose them. It costs me lots of anxiety. I don't want to have to pay (naming a large sum of money, whether \$100,000 or more I am not certain). Now I came down here to see you alone. No one knows I am to meet you here. I don't want to hire you as an attorney in the case, LaFollette, and I don't want you to go into court, but there is fifty dollars, I will give you five hundred more, or a thousand, or five hundred more and a thousand (I am not certain which he said) when Siebecker decides the case right."

I said to him: "Senator Sawyer, you can't know what you are saying to me. If you struck me in the face you would not insult me as you insult me now."

He said: "Wait—hold on." I was standing up. I replied: "No, you do not want me as an attorney. You want to hire me to talk to the judge about your case off the bench."

He said: "I did not think you would take a retainer in the case. I did not think you would want to go into the case as an attorney. How much will you take as a retainer?"

I answered: "You have not got money enough, sir, to employ me as an attorney in your case, after what you have said to me."

He replied: "Well, perhaps I don't understand court rules. Anyway let me pay you for coming down here."

I said: "Not a dollar, sir," and immediately left the room. I think he followed me out of the parlor and down the stairs; but he did not again address me, nor did I again speak to him. I passed at once out of the hotel.

I did not make these facts public, believing that innocent defendants would suffer without cause. I immediately disclosed just what had taken place to close personal friends and stated to them that I believed it my duty to report the matter to the court before the case was called for trial. In this I did not act without deliberation, nor without wise counsel. I subsequently submitted a full statement to the court a few days before he announced his determination not to try the case.

Very respectfully,

ROBERT M. LAFOLLETTE.

If the Sawyer interview proved startling the LaFollette reply directly charging Senator Sawyer with attempted bribery proved even more so, and the criticism and denunciation which LaFollette and friends feared he had invited descended upon his head. A half dozen years later the *Milwaukee Journal* in an editorial deprecating the fight certain papers were making on LaFollette for opposing the ruling political regime said of the incident:

Everybody knows that LaFollette is not the aggressor, but that he was selected for slaughter when he refused to carry out the wishes of the party boss in the treasury cases. For a time it appeared that the Madison man's career had been ruined. In looking over the files of the republican press of that day, we find that with hardly an exception LaFollette was condemned in unmeasured terms by the organs. All kinds of accusations were made against him as if he, instead of the boss, were the guilty one. It was freely charged that the Madison man was getting ready to go over to the democratic party, and that he had already made his arrangements with the opposition. Hardly a republican newspaper in the state had one kind word to say of him for his heroic defense of his honor. But the rank and file of the party understood the service LaFollette had done them and all the other taxpayers of Wisconsin by refusing a price for trying to unlock the back door of a court of justice, and they did not forget him. It was as certain as that the sun would shine that he would sooner or later be called to leadership. The *Journal* warned the organs then that such a time would come. It is here, and the condition of things cannot be changed by alleging that he is making factional warfare. He is but the instrument in the hands of the justice-loving members of the party. The bosses see the handwriting on the wall and that is why they tried to buy him off with the comptrollership of the currency. Twice now LaFollette has refused to sell himself. May he continue to fight off infamy.

LaFollette felt keenly the criticism visited upon him. Many of his friends questioned the wisdom of his course. Prof. W. H. Williams of the University of Wisconsin voiced the views of many when he said: "He has attempted a big thing in inviting a question of veracity with so mighty a man as Sawyer. He'll need all his

nerve now." Many former friends treated him with unmistakably more reserve than usual; others ostracised him completely.

For the time being the controversy ended, and LaFollette devoted himself wholly to his law cases. Finally, threatened with nervous breakdown, he went to South Dakota, where he owned some land, and for three months built up his health with outdoor work.

CHAPTER IV

The Haugen Candidacy for Governor.

LaFOLLETTE ORGANIZES REVOLT AGAINST OLD PARTY LEADERS—REVEALS ASTONISHING ORGANIZING CAPACITY—FIRST BIG CLASH OF REPUBLICAN FACTIONS—UPHAM NOMINATED—NEW LEADER ATTRACTS MARKED ATTENTION.

LITTLE by little a feud had sprung up between LaFollette and the managers of the republican state organization. As a member of the house, the young congressman had proved unwilling to take directions from Payne, Sawyer and other leaders of the party to whom it was customary to pay deference. Now his refusal to protect the secrets and feelings of Sawyer in the treasury matter was considered unpardonable by the party managers and it was decided to complete the overthrow of his defeat for congress by eliminating him from any position of influence in the party.

In accordance with this program, the party machinery of Dane county, which he, as a member of congress, had grown to control, was in 1892 taken out of the hands of his friends and the chairmanship given to Roger C. Spooner, a brother of Senator John C. Spooner. LaFollette's last ground was captured. He was completely outside the breastworks. When he attended the republican national convention at Minneapolis as a spectator with his friend S. A. Harper, in 1892, he was made to feel by the state politicians present that he was to enjoy no confidences nor be considered in the making of any arrangements for the campaign.

In previous campaigns he had been eagerly sought by party chairmen to speak throughout the state and although the new state chairman of that year, Henry C. Thom, was his personal friend, LaFollette received no

invitation to assist in the campaign that fall, notwithstanding that it was a presidential year and a critical time for the party.

Resolved, however, to maintain himself as a political factor, he wrote to Mr. Thom offering his services. Mr. Thom soon afterward called upon LaFollette at his office and said he had been advised to not put him in the field, owing to the feeling against him. Thereupon LaFollette promptly declared that he would make his own arrangements. Rather than have that done, Chairman Thom placed him on the list of speakers and his meetings proved the usual great successes.

LaFollette saw that to live in Wisconsin politics it would be necessary to make peace with the party machine or make war upon it. Burning with his still unquenched, youthful enthusiasm; indignant at the ostracism and censure visited upon him because of the Sawyer affair; confident of his powers, and eager to remedy in some degree the sordid political conditions prevailing, he resolved upon the latter course. His design was no less than the ambitious one of taking the governorship out of the hands of the "machine."

LaFollette seemed peculiarly called and fitted to lead and carry through successfully a reform movement in the state, not only because of his great native talent and qualities, but because of the abrupt turn in his personal fortunes caused by his defeat for congress in 1890. Now scarcely across the threshold of teeming manhood, and burning for achievement, he was relegated to the state field through an election defeat, followed by a gerrymander of his district to prevent his return to congress.

It is an interesting subject of speculation as to whether or not the reform movement in Wisconsin would have materialized into success, or the form and time it would have taken, had LaFollette retained his seat in congress. A period of purely state service was not in the schedule

of his admiring friends, who saw in perspective a distinguished career for him in the United States senate, little dreaming of the tremendous upheaval he was to bring about in the state before being consigned to that somewhat archaic limbo of high abilities and political hopes at Washington.

Events seemed to have conspired, however, to bring him into the new field and accordingly early in 1894 he signalized his return to active politics by standing sponsor for the candidacy of Nils P. Haugen for governor. As usual he had taken time by the forelock. In November, 1893, he wrote to Congressman Haugen asking him to call at Madison on his way to Washington. When Haugen came LaFollette broached to him the proposition of a fight upon the organization with Haugen as the candidate for governor. Haugen represented the old Eighth Wisconsin district in congress and was the only republican member to withstand the democratic landslide of 1890. Mr. LaFollette had served with him in congress and had come to regard him highly because of his large abilities and his patriotic and fearless stand for public interests. A popular and brilliant representative of the Norwegian nationality, a strong vote-getter and a public official with an excellent record, he was believed to be the most effective candidate with which to assault the intrenchments of the ruling powers.

When the gubernatorial proposition was first suggested, Haugen pointed out the apparent hopelessness of the undertaking, the lack of funds, the power of the organization, etc. However, he consented to let LaFollette write to the latter's old university friends and others to ascertain their sentiments in the matter. LaFollette sent about a thousand letters to such friends throughout the state asking them to join in requesting Haugen to run. Afterward Haugen met LaFollette at Chicago and they spent a day at the Grand Pacific hotel

going over the letters. The responses were quite encouraging and after another conference at the LaFollette home in Madison, attended by Mr. and Mrs. LaFollette, Mr. Haugen, S. A. Harper, General George E. Bryant and H. W. Chynoweth, Haugen consented to sacrifice his congressional prospects and make the run. There was no illusion about it. "It will probably mean the loss of your seat in congress and your defeat in the convention," said LaFollette, "but the cause demands some sacrifice on our part; and there is a half chance to win." LaFollette agreed to take all responsibility in the management of the campaign and to make it a vigorous one.

The campaign that followed is an interesting chapter in the story of LaFollette, for he was here to reveal for the first time on a broad scale his variability of genius as a winner and organizer of men—that native endowment by which he was to rise from the lowest point, following his humiliation by the party leaders, to be the great commanding figure of the state, and the beginning of which ascendancy he had to make without money or patronage at his disposal, without a newspaper and without social or political alliances of influence.

The brightest figure in all history is the revolutionist—the leader willing to risk his all in the great cause to make over the world for humanity.

There was about LaFollette even then a persuasive hypnotic power which it was difficult to resist. Mr. Lenroot said in later years: "I did not want to be a candidate for governor in 1906, but when LaFollette asked me, how could I refuse?" It was a characteristic tribute. Of LaFollette, more than of most public men, can it be said that he increased his social and political assets with each new meeting with a fellow man. The words of Count de Segur on Napoleon's charm of manner may be here recalled as not inaptly fitting the later political general now rising:

When he wanted to persuade there was a kind of charm in his deportment which it was impossible to resist. One felt overpowered by his superior strength, and compelled, as it were, to submit to his influence. It was, if it may be so explained, a kind of magnetic influence, for his ardent and variable genius infused itself entirely into all his desires, the least as well as the greatest; whatever he willed all his energies and all his faculties united to effect; they appeared at his beck, they hastened forward and obedient to his dictation, simultaneously assumed the forms which he desired.

It has been a serious question with many people whether or not, at least in its first years, the LaFollette reform movement was inspired by any other motive than the personal ambition of LaFollette. But to whatever degree his personal ambitions were the inspiration of the uprising, it must be said he had a remarkable facility or fortune in making himself and his cause interchangeable in the public mind, making it possible for him to press his propaganda while his friends rather urged support of the man.

A flood of stories and yarns has come down from this interesting period and the years immediately following, showing the compelling enthusiasm with which he drove forward his cause, and revealing a facile personality to explain in large degree the sway he exercised over the minds and hearts of his almost idolatrous fellows.

It is an interesting if not significant fact that LaFollette's propaganda first took root, and his cause received its first substantial support, among the Norwegians of Wisconsin. He was shrewd enough early to get the support of the widely read Chicago Norwegian paper "*Skandinaven*." That his dashing effort to secure the election of Congressman Haugen as governor strengthened him immensely with the nationality is not to be doubted, but LaFollette has always been close to the Norwegian heart, for the reason that he understands and appreciates it as do few politicians and students even within the nationality. He was brought up in a Nor-

wegian community; he can to an extent speak the tongue, and with an almost faultless accent; in short, he knows the Norwegian nature and temper. This kinship of feeling was strikingly reciprocated in the later campaign of 1900 when out of 241 votes cast in the town of Scandinavia in Waupaca county, LaFollette received all but one, a phenomenon deserving to rank with that of 1910 when the republicans of Wisconsin actually nominated a dead progressive above a living rival for one of the highest of state offices. A further and not unamusing incident may be here recalled. At a banquet of the Scandinavian legislators in Madison in 1901 the governor was present as a guest, and in the course of the evening was playfully informed that he was suspected of possessing Norwegian blood. Prof. Julius E. Olson was speaking and related the inspiring story of the battle of Stiklestad, in Norway, in 1030, where the old and the new civilizations—paganism and Christianity—met and where Tord Folleson, the heroic standard bearer of the new cause, when mortally wounded, pressed forward with the flag and rammed it into the earth before sinking to death beneath it. Not long before, said the speaker, the northmen had descended upon France, wrested a fair province from its weak ruler and built up that Norman influence destined to color all future civilization. The names Folleson and LaFollette, he said, looked suspiciously alike. What was more natural to infer than that the governor's forbears may have been among that daring band of adventurers and institution builders, the Normans? Blood would tell even longer. Tord Folleson determined that the flag should stand even if the man had to fall. So with the governor; he, too, could be relied upon to advance the flag even if he fell beneath it. (Great applause and cries of "Skaal!")

But there is another important factor to consider in this connection—the Norwegian love of liberty. Ever

since the grim bonders of Thronthjem compelled King Haakon to eat horseflesh and showed their contempt of another tyrannical prince by slaying him and electing his dog to the throne, the Norwegian peasant has been jealous of the encroachments of privilege and power on his rights. Having long enjoyed a liberal representative form of government, the nationality is also keenly alive to its civic responsibilities and familiar with the operations of government. In fact a large proportion of the immigrants from Norway have determined before "coming over" with what political party they intend to affiliate. This fact combined with its inherited love of liberty would tend to make the nationality favorable ground for sowing the seeds of revolt against privilege in government. The Norwegian uprising in Wisconsin a decade and a half ago is not unlike that which swept Norway three quarters of a century ago and which resulted in the driving out of an oppressive official class—an inheritance from the Danish union—and the substituting of peasant members of parliament, some of whom, like Ueland and Jaabek, "wrought their people lasting good." In this connection, as has been noted, LaFollette was fortunate in his early campaigns in having the support of the big Norwegian papers circulating in Wisconsin, like the *Skandinaven* of Chicago, and the *Tidende* of Minneapolis. The *Skandinaven* was won over to LaFollette in 1900 by a delegation which included former Congressman Haugen, John L. Erickson of Superior and others. It is said that when this delegation went into the office to see John Anderson, the publisher of the *Skandinaven*, they met Henry C. Payne of Milwaukee coming out from a like conference with Anderson with a view of lining up the paper against LaFollette. When this latter delegation, however, informed Anderson that the Norwegians of Wisconsin were pro-LaFollette and that the *Minneapolis Tidende* was making capital of that

fact Anderson threw the support of his paper to LaFollette and continued to support him in all his campaigns for the governorship.

In 1906, however, it was a different story. It is said that Anderson promised LaFollette and Lenroot that he would support the latter in his campaign for governor as against J. O. Davidson, the so-called Norwegian candidate, and that only on that condition would Lenroot consent to make the race. Then it is said that Anderson sent out a number of letters as "feelers," and found that the Lenroot candidacy would not take among the Norwegians on account of the temporary anti-Swedish sentiment growing out of the dissolution of the union of Sweden and Norway of the year before. Accordingly the *Skandinaven* remained largely neutral throughout this campaign, only occasionally damning Lenroot with faint praise, and Davidson was nominated.

Although the so-called Germans of Wisconsin form a very heavy voting element, they have not been so potent a political factor as have the Norwegians so-called. In spite of the fact, too, that many of them came here as exiles, imbued with the revolutionary spirit of '48, LaFollette's cause made slow headway with them at first. It was not that they were a servile class, although, being more accustomed to tyranny than the Norwegians, they could bear a degree of villeinage with less unrest. The German is as jealous of his rights as is the Norwegian, but the conception of liberty is different in the two minds. The Norwegian watches his political liberty jealously, the German, his personal liberty. The *summum bonum* in the German mind has too often been "personal liberty," and the possible deprivation of this right has been the bugaboo which the shrewd politician has often conjured up to "swing the German vote."

It was not until time had proved that LaFollette's crusade did not comprehend designs on this cherished

right—and the German language—that they came over to the support of the movement. Once over, however, they became a bulwark of strength to it, as demonstrated in the Milwaukee movement in 1898.

One day LaFollette was visited by a man who had stumped the entire west in the interests of the people's party and who had been one of the "intellectuals" in the first Oregon movement in the '90s. Said the stranger:

"Our movement has gone down; I am a man without a party."

"The time for great souls is when all is lost. You belong with us," said LaFollette.

"But I believe in the initiative and the referendum. Can I be a republican and hold such views?"

"You can; I believe in them myself."

"I am also for the popular election of senators."

"So am I."

"I also favor government ownership and control of railroads."

"We may have to come to that; but we must first obtain and try railroad regulation. If that fails the people will no doubt take over their common carriers."

"But I am against monopoly-breeding tariffs, although I am a protectionist. Can I hold such views and still be a republican?"

"I am also a protectionist, but favor a tariff that, in general, shall measure the difference between the cost of production at home and in competing foreign countries."

"I had not thought of tariff legislation in that light," said the visitor. "If I can be that kind of a republican I am with you. I am happy to again take up the fight."

LaFollette has been ever ready to give with regal freedom of his time and the riches of his mind whenever anyone has sought his counsel. For instance, until the time of his election to the United States senate he regularly drilled university oratorical contestants free of charge. The writer recalls vividly also how when an obscure student in the university he called at the law office of the future governor and how the latter spent two or three hours—forgetting his supper in the meantime—in presenting the necessity for, and outlining with large forevision, the reforms to which he was resolving to set his hand and which in the main have since been crystallized into law in the state and are now being adopted in the nation. It was a great task for which he was preparing to gird on his armor and to the writer the undertaking seemed akin to the wildest of dreams, but of his absolute sincerity and the disinterestedness of his motives there seemed no room for doubt.

The devotion which LaFollette inspired in the young collegians who fell under his sway amounted almost to fanaticism and in certain instances the manifestations of their enthusiasm took on amusing and fantastic forms. Could the history of the Lincoln club, an ephemeral organization formed two decades ago, be written it would make entertaining reading in this respect. This was an organization of university students formed, not for the extension of LaFollette propaganda, which had not yet assumed concrete form; but to build up a LaFollette following in the state and to deliver their respective sections over to LaFollette candidates. At their weekly meetings in a small room in the university the boys solemnly discussed the possibilities of victory and the lines of campaign most practicable, and each pledged himself to carry his home county for the cause. Even the uttermost corners of the state were involved in this comprehensive scheme and in several instances counties were

assigned to shy and beardless youngsters who had never been within their borders. Not a few of the boys set out on this children's crusade never to be heard from again until years afterward, although some of them have since risen high in the councils of the state and nation and in their professions.

As illustrating LaFollette's persuasive power the following later story—a favorite recitation of Roger M. Andrew's—is remembered: One old man who for years had driven all over Dane county in the interests of the governor finally went to him to ask a favor in return. He wanted the governor to ask the congressman of the district to recommend him for postmaster at Clifton's Corners. "It is asking quite a favor, I know," said the aspirant in his humility, too honest to know that he had earned it ten times over, "but if you could do this for me I would feel very grateful."

The governor lovingly put his arm about the rounded and dusty shoulders of his visitor and turning his ardent eyes upon those of the farmer, piercing the rural soul to its innermost depths, said in a voice eloquent with sympathy and affection:

"Nels, nobody appreciates more than Bob LaFollette what you have done. You have often been in my thoughts. I know the sacrifices you have made; how you have driven all day and ridden through blinding storms at night to cheer and further our cause. I know how you have neglected your crops; how you have spent your money; how you have had to bear the scorn and enmity of your neighbors for the sake of principle. All these things I have seen and I have admired you and held you up as the finest type of citizen and patriot—the bulwark and hope of the state and nation. Without your brave and unflagging support in the dark and criti-

cal times we have had I am afraid our cause might have gone down.

"You are deserving of something infinitely better than a paltry postoffice and I have often wondered how I could reward you in a manner to meet your high deserts. But now it grieves and embarrasses me deeply that I must ask you to defer your request till some happier future time. I had long marked you as the man that should have this postoffice, but quite unexpectedly General Bryant has come and asked me to give it to one of his friends. General Bryant, you know, has been a second father to me. It was he who took me up when friendless and penniless I was about to quit the university. He gave me money, clothes and best of all his friendship and sound counsel. He has been my friend ever since, standing by me in storm and shine. It was he who first sent me to congress. He has labored for the party year in and year out; you know how manfully he has stood for our reforms when so many of the old wheel horses of the party had gone over to the enemy. Now for all that he has done for me I feel that I could not refuse this gallant old veteran any request that he might make. Yet here I am in a conflict between love and duty. I leave it to you if it is not an embarrassing sit——."

It was as far as the governor got. The old man had risen to his feet, his eyes suffused with emotion. "Give it to the old general," he said hoarsely. "If you don't Bob LaFollette will never get another vote from me. What is there I can do next?"

Another later incident in point is the following: During one of the earlier LaFollette campaigns a Grant county stockbuyer who had been an ardent supporter of LaFollette had the misfortune on election day to fall under a train while on the way to Chicago and have an arm crushed. He was placed in the baggage car for

medical treatment. The next morning one of his neighbors on the train hearing of his plight went into the baggage ear to condole with him. "Good gracious, old boy, what has happened to you?" said the visitor sympathetically. "Oh, just a little accident, that's all," replied the victim. "Say, how did Bob come out?"

LaFollette had that invaluable politician's stock in trade, an almost unerring memory for names and faces. It was actually believed by some that he had an uncanny power in this respect, and the yarn is told that to test him a farmer from Dunkirk once took to Madison a neighbor whom LaFollette had never seen nor known. LaFollette gripped the hand of the unknown, and peering keenly into his face said: "Yes, let's see, you're Jim Simpson, aren't you?" "No," replied the visitor with a grin, "but I know Jim; I bought a horse from him last week." "Oh, yes," replied LaFollette. "I knew there was something between you. It was that handsome gray, wasn't it?" he continued, brushing off some gray hairs that had accumulated on the ruralite's shoulders.

"It was, all right!" said the farmer in utter astonishment. LaFollette had unconsciously saved his reputation by playfully taking a long chance on some stray gray hairs.

A similar story has it that once when LaFollette had concluded a lecture in a western city a grizzled listener present walked unsteadily up to the platform where LaFollette was receiving, surrounded by a group of fashionable men and women, and slapping him familiarly on the back called out in a high key, "Well, neow, I'll bet you don't know who I am?" LaFollette had not seen his interrogator for twenty years, but the man's name came to him like a flash, and he replied, "Yes, I

do; you're So-and-So and used to live near Mt. ———, didn't you?"

"Wall, neow, heow the thunder did you remember me anyheow?" went on his questioner, with a shoreless expanse of grin on his florid countenance. Drawing the old man's head down that the rest of the company might not hear, LaFollette replied with a twinkle:

"Because you've got the same old jag on."

And yet there are those who say that LaFollette has no wit nor humor. Some years ago an excellent magazine writer of New England, after himself describing an incident which had set the whole country laughing, viz., LaFollette's defeat of Gallinger for president pro tem of the senate, said solemnly: "He hasn't a particle of humor. His friends say that he has, but they haven't any themselves."

However, it should be remembered that this scribe had just been discussing this supposed side of the Wisconsin statesman with the writer of the present work and a former editor of the university funny paper.

The same day that Mr. Haugen's candidacy was announced Horace A. Taylor of Madison ("Uncle Hod"), editor of the *Wisconsin State Journal*, former state senator and former chairman of the state central committee, also came out as a candidate for governor.

Dane county thus became a hot battlefield. LaFollette resolved "to move heaven and earth," he said, to carry it for Haugen, not only because of the prestige its heavy representation would give his candidate in the convention, but since it was his (LaFollette's) home county, it would not do to have simply the prophet's honor abroad. His pride was further challenged by the fact that the county organization had been taken out of the hands of his supporters two years before. But Dane county was also the home of Mr. Taylor and of

“Boss” Keyes and the Spooners, all leagued in the common cause of resisting LaFollette’s recapture of the county. In full understanding with Sawyer and Payne, it is said, they brought out numerous local candidates “to gather in the provinces,” an old political trick, often a successful one; however, destined to fail in its general purpose this time, as it failed again on a larger scale when attempted in 1900 for the defeat of LaFollette’s nomination for governor that year. In addition to the candidacy of Mr. Taylor of Madison for the governorship, T. C. Lund of Stoughton was urged for secretary of state, Halle Steensland of Madison for state treasurer, H. C. Adams of Madison for railroad commissioner, Ralph C. Vernon of Madison for state prison warden, while two Madison lawyers were encouraged to groom themselves for the position of assistant attorney general and two other prominent residents of the city for that of assistant superintendent of public property. With this combination of influence they succeeded eventually in carrying the cities of Madison and Stoughton against Haugen. This nerved LaFollette to greater efforts to carry the country districts.

The contest was sharp from the beginning. LaFollette won, as so many battles have been won, by a spirited dash. Through quick action he succeeded in getting caucuses held in certain towns before the opposition could organize and thus carried them for Haugen. At this the charge of “snap caucuses” was raised, a familiar cry in later years. The LaFollette-anti-LaFollette factionalism in the republican party in Wisconsin may thus be said to have had its first clash of arms in Dane county. It sounds familiar to read of the republicans of the town of Perry on June 7, 1894, adopting a “hurl-back-with-scorn” resolution against the charge of “snap caucuses.” This was probably the first resolution marking the factional alignment now impending in Wisconsin.

Many were the sharp caucus praetiees resorted to also. In some localities it was a trick of the "half-breeds," as the LaFollette followers came to be called, to arrange beforehand to seat their following near the door, and thus force the opposition to some other quarter. It is a usual situation at public gatherings that a greater or less number of speetators, idly eurious and otherwise, stand about the doorway. Accordingly when the house rose in questions of division these "innoeent speetators" could be counted in with the half-breeds of which they would seem to form a part. When the chairman happened to be of the half-breed persuasion questions would be put in such form that his side had the first vote and accordingly such speetators were not counted for the other side. It was in vain for the opposition to protest; the chairman having once entered upon such tactics could be depended upon to carry them through.

An aerimonious warfare was carried on in the local press. Mr. Taylor charged that John M. Nelson and Walter S. Hidden, state employes, drew pay and did no work, to which Hidden retorted in public print that Taylor, as United States railway commissioner, took a junketing party to California at government expense and that a future member of his (Taylor's) family was carried on the public pay roll at a large salary and did no work.

With the Madison papers all opposing him, LaFollette flooded the county with personal letters. Always a believer in the liberal use of printer's ink, he established a literary bureau in his law office and here personally dictated the thousands of letters sent out.

LaFollette infused his infectious enthusiasm into the caucus campaign. Night riders galloped from farmhouse to farmhouse in Haugen's behalf, a new feature in campaigning. After a day of reverses he would write cheeringly:

"They (the opposition) had their inning today; tomorrow we must have ours. Let us make it decisive."

And decisive it proved. Although losing Madison and Stoughton, he carried Dane county for Haugen and headed the delegation to the Milwaukee convention. He also succeeded in carrying every other county of his old congressional district. In much the same manner as in Dane was the campaign carried on in other counties. Ten candidates for governor were supported at the convention. As was expected, Haugen was not nominated, the machine leaders finally uniting their forces on William H. Upham of Marshfield, who was named on the sixth ballot, but so unstrung did the organization then become that the Haugen forces practically controlled the remaining nominations. The fact that LaFollette in his brief and brilliant campaign and with the slenderest financial resources finally carried nearly one-third of the delegates for Haugen marked him at once as a rare organizer and leader. "We came out of that campaign tremendously enthused and stimulated for the work ahead," said LaFollette later.

Particularly was his achievement in carrying Dane county, after losing the cities of Madison and Stoughton, regarded as a striking example of political generalship and staying qualities. It proved LaFollette strong with the farmers.

The old time leaders were given a shock at Haugen's strength. LaFollette was pointed out and sought for in the convention. Many who were later to be among his most ardent lieutenants met him here for the first time and formed the bond of friendship. Among the delegates later to become prominent in the LaFollette movement were Walter L. Houser, H. S. Comstock, Atley Peterson, A. H. Long, George E. Bryant, H. W. Chynoweth, John M. Nelson, A. J. Vinje, Ira B. Bradford, A. R. Hall, J. H. Stout, J. J. McGillivray, A. W. Sanborn,

Perry C. Wilder, W. D. Connor, F. A. Cady and A. H. Dahl, while among those later to be prominent in opposing LaFollette were J. V. Quarles, M. G. Jeffris, D. E. Riordan, John Harris and S. S. Barney.

It is interesting to note here as marking the old political methods—that of appealing to voters on the glory of the grand old party alone and leaving the settlement of state issues to politicians—that the platform contained only 350 words and had no reference to state issues except this closing paragraph, a shooing of the Bennett law bogie:

“The republican party is a party of religious liberty and absolute non-sectarianism, of entire separation of church and state, of free common schools, of the utmost independence of individual thought, speech and action within the law.”

This plank, by the way, appeared in the republican platforms of 1896 and 1898 as well, except that in the last named year someone sought to improve it by substituting for the last three words, “within the law,” the more prolix form, “consistent with the law and the rights of others.”

The plank marks the backing down of the party on the Bennett law issue. The republicans had been silent on this issue in 1892, but the democratic victory of that year made a declaration advisable in 1894. In 1900 the ghost of the Bennett law was finally considered laid and the plank disappeared from the platforms.

CHAPTER V

LaFollette's First Candidacy for Governor.

ANOTHER SHARP CAMPAIGN—HOARD DISCLAIMS UNDERSTANDING OR DEAL AT CONVENTION—BRIBERY OF DELEGATES CHARGED—SCOFFIELD NOMINATED.

A RECRUDESCENCE of the uprising of the LaFollette-Haugen element in 1896 was inevitable, composed as this element largely was of eager, elate young men, fired with ideals and enthusiasm, and inspired by the strong showing they had made in the previous campaign. LaFollette was naturally regarded by this element as the logical candidate for governor and in time he announced his candidacy.

That he had retained the grip he had once more acquired on his old congressional district in 1894 was demonstrated early in the campaign by his election as a delegate to the republican national convention at St. Louis. Judge E. W. Keyes, former state chairman, had been brought out against him, but after LaFollette had carried every ward in their home city of Madison and every county in the district but one, he was chosen by acclamation. At this national convention he served on the committee on resolutions, and also made a speech placing in nomination for the vice presidency, Henry Clay Evans of Tennessee.

This national convention was to prove of more than passing interest and significance to Wisconsin state politics. Although the democrats had obtained a new lease of power in 1892, they were defeated in 1894. A roster printing scandal proved embarrassing to them and the republicans strengthened themselves by repudiating the Bennett law and playing heavily on the dramatic military record of Major Upham—thus carrying the elec-

tion. However, once back in power, the republicans proceeded to repudiate their generally expressed pledges to continue the prosecution of the treasury cases so successfully begun by the democrats. Already nearly half a million dollars had been retrieved by the democrats and nearly half as much again remained involved.

It is at this point that Charles F. Pfister, the big Milwaukee boss, enters as an influential factor in state politics. Through the influence of a powerful lobby organized by him, bills were put through the legislature in 1895 relieving the state treasurers and their bondsmen, and these bills were signed by Governor Upham. This action of Upham's, coupled with the fact that he had seemed rather too accommodating to certain interests and that certain jealous rivals—such as "Hod" Taylor of the *Wisconsin State Journal*—were making relentless war on him, seemed to the party leaders to make Upham almost impossible as a candidate for reelection. Accordingly, the machine managers, Sawyer, Payne, Pfister and others, met at the Planters hotel in St. Louis during the republican convention and selected Edward Scofield for the next candidate.

A sharp campaign followed. LaFollette conducted his fight along the lines of the Haugen campaign and so successfully prosecuted it that he and his friends believed he had a majority of the delegates to the state convention. A margin of a dozen votes was claimed for him. When the convention opened at Milwaukee, August 5th, even the opposition press predicted that he would lead in the balloting, as in fact he did the next day. A great demonstration following a spirited speech in his favor by former Governor Hoard, indicated the popularity of the new leader. Before a nomination was made, however, adjournment was taken until next day and the LaFollette cause, whatever its prospects at the time, was thereby lost. Major Scofield was nominated.

LaFollette has himself frequently told the story that his delegates were brutally bought away from him that night and his account may well be incorporated here as it will aid in an understanding of the political conditions and practices then prevailing and may help make clearer his relentless zeal in the future prosecution of his cause. In a speech some years ago, he said:

I went down to that convention with votes enough instructed and pledged to nominate me on the first formal ballot for governor. I had no money to make the fight; I had no fortune that had come to me; I had no newspaper. I had the freedom of speech that our flag and the principles of our government give to every citizen.

I was not nominated; I just said that I went down there with votes enough instructed and pledged to nominate me, but I didn't get them voted. Why? I am here to tell you why. Because the night before the ballot was to begin, in the room of a United States senator, they bought enough of my delegates with money, running from \$25 to \$700 a vote, to defeat me the next day in the convention. That is why I was not nominated.

Did you understand me? I said *bought—bought!* Now, I wouldn't say that if I couldn't prove it. By ten o'clock that night delegates began to come to my headquarters in the Hotel Pfister, where all the candidates had their headquarters. They began to come to my headquarters and tell me that they had been taken into the room of that United States senator and had been offered various sums for their vote, running from \$25 to \$700 apiece, in so far as they reported to me. Of course, nobody came over and told me who took the money; it was only those who were honest enough to refuse to take it. I took down their statements. By midnight I had taken the statements of twenty men.

At midnight one of the great political bosses of the state came to my headquarters and said: "LaFollette, I want to see you alone." I went into a room with him and he said: "We have got you skinned. We have got enough of your delegates to defeat you in the convention tomorrow. Now, we don't want any scandal; we don't want to hurt the republican party." The man who had been doing all this did not want to hurt the republican party. He said to me: "We don't want to hurt the republican party. If you will behave yourself and keep still, we will take care of you when the proper time comes."

That is their measure of men; every man his price, they think. No man patriotic in the civil service. Everyone concedes patriotism when the cannon thunders, but there can be patriotism in time of peace as well as in time of war. Thank God! if that were not so, our country could not stand for a day.

"We will take care of you when the proper time comes." Take care of me. Well! I felt then, and I have felt ever since, that I could take care of myself. I looked that gentleman in the face, and that you may have the record complete, I will tell you who he is. Charles F. Pfister, one of the millionaire political bosses of Wisconsin, and it was in the Pfister hotel that this transpired. I want to say to you, fellow citizens, don't think for a moment that I have sneaked off down here to talk about this thing. When that convention was over I said to one of the political bosses of the state: "You have carried this convention by corruption; I have the proof of it here. When the time comes to make the best use of that evidence to redeem this state to representative government and crush the life out of your corrupt political machine, I will use this evidence."

And in 1904, when a bolt had been organized by the so-called stalwart republicans of that state, I used that evidence, and from every platform in my state, closing in the metropolis of the state two nights before the election at Milwaukee in the Exposition building, in the presence of 10,000 people who stood until way past midnight to hear the discussion, I proclaimed the fact, called the roll and named the men and the prices.

Next day they did exactly what they said they would do. They defeated me in the convention.

Among the men, in addition to those mentioned by LaFollette, who claimed to have been witnesses of bribery was Robert F. Howard, a Milwaukee newspaperman. He declared that he had seen five men receive \$50 apiece and offered to give LaFollette an affidavit to that effect at any time.

But there were other men at this convention and other incidents that were to prove important factors. The big machine managers, Sawyer, Payne, Pfister, Keyes and others, were on hand to give quiet and effective direction to things. Former Governor Hoard was perhaps the most conspicuous of the delegates. The opponents of LaFollette had industriously circulated the report of a

deal between LaFollette and Hoard involving the governorship and the next United States senatorship, and that in the event of success these two leaders would urge the re-enactment of the Bennett law. A dramatic speech by Hoard in which he declared that the ghost of the Bennett law was laid and in which he denied the existence of any deal whatever was one of the stirring features of the convention.

Undeterred by previous failures also, A. R. Hall was again on hand with his anti-pass resolution. He had presented the same resolution at the convention of 1894, but the committee on resolutions had quietly pigeon-holed it and it was never heard of again. The friends of the pass system now thought to repeat this trick in a motion made by H. G. Kress of Manitowoc that all proposed declarations be referred to the committee on resolutions without reading or debate. But Hall was too quick to be caught napping. Jumping to his feet, he offered this amendment:

And all such resolutions not favorably acted upon by the committee be reported back to the convention and be open for debate.

It was a clever move on Hall's part. It would be a dangerous proposition to vote down. The chair (Gen. Michael Griffin) hesitated, put the question, and it was adopted. But Hall not yet having presented his resolution, another attempt was made to forestall him by an unexpected promptness in reporting the platform. However, when the platform had been read and before the chair could put the vote for its adoption, Hall was on his feet, shouting for recognition. It was impossible to ignore him. Receiving recognition, Hall adroitly praised the platform which had been reported; then, as if quite by the way, added that the voters of Dunn county had requested that he present a resolution to the convention. Before Hall could read it, Chairman Griffin promptly

declared him out of order. But Hall held his ground and demanded the chair's reason for the ruling.

"Under a previous motion that all proposed planks should first go to the committee on resolutions," replied the chair. Hall answered that the committee had been too quick for him, but the chair rapped him out of order. Nevertheless, Hall still stood firm and declared that the people of Wisconsin had a right to be heard at any time.

"The resolution must go to the committee in the usual manner," shouted the chair and again rapped for order.

Hall refused to be beaten down. A dramatic scene then followed as these two old military and political veterans, who had fought together at Atlanta, faced one another—the gaunt man from Dunn, shaking his spectral finger and quivering with excitement, and the chair coolly and firmly facing the rebellious delegate. The breath of battle was in the air as the chair in a ringing voice commanded silence and declared: "The sergeant-at-arms will enforce order in the convention!" It was a moment of suspense and apprehension; delegates began mounting their chairs and many feared blows between the rival partisans as Sergeant-Zweitusch swung down the aisle toward Hall. Finally, Hall, still protesting, was pulled down by his friends and his resolution was sent up in written form. This ended the incident for the time being; the platform was adopted and the candidates nominated.

When on the following day, however, the chairman of the committee on resolutions asked to recall a notice of a meeting of his committee, Hall, scenting another attempt to shelve his resolution, rose to his feet. With an apology to the chair for the incident of the day before, he obtained a hearing and again called for action on his resolution.

Another attempt was made to refer his resolution back to the committee, but Hall made a fiery demand

that the resolution be acted upon at once. He asserted that the people of Wisconsin had voted 50,000 to 600 at the spring elections the year before for practically the same plank and the convention should respond to such demand. Declaring that the platform was already adopted, but fearful of turning the resolution down, the chair finally put Hall's motion and the resolution was adopted amid cheers from the LaFollette following. The resolution read as follows:

Resolved, that it is the sense of this convention that the granting of free railroad passes, express and telegraph franks and sleeping car permits by the corporations of this state to public officers is against public policy and we favor such laws as will prevent the same.

Out of this incident others of striking interest were to grow.

That LaFollette could prove a good loser was shown in the campaign that fall, when he threw himself into the fight and made twenty-five speeches for his party. He closed with a masterly effort in Milwaukee—his first speech in that city—the night before election. The *Milwaukee Sentinel* printed the speech in full and was enthusiastic over the young orator. "He interpolated the dry, hard facts of financial history with pathos and humor," it said, "and carried his audience with unflagging interest. The speaker walked backwards and forward across the stage; he sat down on the chairman's table and almost stepped from the stage into the very midst of his auditors. It was the first time he ever faced a Milwaukee audience and yet no one would have suspected the fact had he not so informed them. He attempted to draw his address to a close several times, but was forced to go on by his hearers. When he finally sat down, the great audience rose up and gave three rousing cheers for the speaker. Then there was a general rush for the stage and for half an hour he was kept busy shaking hands and receiving congratulations."

CHAPTER VI

“Menace-of-the-Machine” Speech.

SIGNIFICANT YEAR IN LAFOLLETTE MOVEMENT—FUTURE GOVERNOR FORESHADOWS CRUSADE IN CHICAGO ADDRESS—PROPOSES PRIMARY ELECTIONS—FERN DELL SPEECH—BEGINS SPEAKING AT COUNTY FAIRS—PRESS GREATLY INTERESTED IN CRUSADE AND ITS PURPOSE.

IT IS a distinguishing mark of the benefactors of humanity, in whatever their field of endeavor, that they have always held service to their fellows above sale. Favored with superior gifts, it had been theirs to command fortune, respectability and influence with little difficulty, had they cared to choose the easier established ways of society. By choosing not to take such course, they often become the martyrs of history, and the very fact that they have been unpurchasable has ever led to misunderstanding, to the impugning of motives, to charges of egotism and self-seeking. It has been their peculiar glory, however, that they have never shrunk from paying this inevitable price, of bearing calumny and misunderstanding, the dungeon and the stake, for the glory of God and their righteous causes.

In contemplating LaFollette's choosing of a similar course the question may occur, has he been sustained from the pages of history and knowledge of the final vindication that has come to the heroes and martyrs of the past? It is related that on the taking up of his political crusade in Wisconsin he made a study of historic movements and uprisings of peoples in other lands and at other times, to draw therefrom such lessons of wisdom and fortitude as might be obtained. The revolts of Grecian and Roman history, Jack Cade's rebellion, the Cromwellian uprising, the American and French revolu-

tions, the Chartist movement—these were, it is said, among the historical phenomena to which nights of study were given. It is a tradition that this was done at the inspired suggestion of Jerre C. Murphy, who became the first private secretary of LaFollette while governor.

While the lion's share of credit for the political regeneration of Wisconsin is yielded by all to LaFollette, there are, as with all great things, those who claim priority of initiative and discovery.

It is said that before LaFollette took up his crusade against the ruling political machine in the state Murphy had evolved the theory that the only hope of undoing the "machine" was to discover a man of the people, and develop in him capacities for leadership, stratagem and battle that would in time cause him to prevail over the forces of entrenched privilege. He, it is said, came to this conclusion from a like previous study of great revolts of history and the lives of liberators of peoples. He believed he had discovered such a man in LaFollette, and whether or not he set the future reformer on his crusading career it is said he early urged such course upon him and gave such organized impetus to the cause as he could.

The year 1897 looms large in the annals of LaFollette and political reform in Wisconsin. It was in this year—memorable to him and his cause—that the future leader discovered himself and developed the master passion to which he was later so unreservedly to give himself.

Smarting under the humiliation of having his delegates taken away from him in the convention of the previous year, and eager to remedy the sordid political conditions that prevailed, LaFollette boldly resolved upon a campaign for the complete abolition of the caucus and convention system.

In its stead he decided to propose primary elections for the direct nomination of all candidates for public

offices, from the lowest to the highest. This conclusion he formed only after months of study of the caucus, convention and election laws of all the states of the union as well as those of many foreign lands. There was then no thoroughgoing primary in any state, although the legislatures in a number of states had begun breaking the new ground in sporadic ways, and even the Wisconsin legislature had enacted a primary system for the city of Milwaukee which, however, proved short-lived. LaFollette was intelligent and alert enough to discern the new movement in its rising.

Accordingly when invited to give the annual address before the University of Chicago on Washington's birthday of that year he made his celebrated "Menace-of-the-Machine" speech in which he first publicly advocated primary elections for the nomination of all political candidates. Discussing the operations under the Australian ballot he said:

Is there any good reason why a plan so successful in securing a free, honest ballot and a fair count in the election will not work equally well in the nomination of candidates?

Then every citizen will share equally in the nomination of the candidates of his party and attend primary elections as a privilege as well as a duty. It will no longer be necessary to create an artificial interest in the general election to induce voters to attend. Intelligent, well considered judgment will be substituted for unthinking enthusiasm, the lamp of reason for the torchlight. The voter will not require to be persuaded that he has an interest in the election. He will know that the nominations of the party will not be the result of "compromise," or impulse, or vile design—the "barrel" and the machine, but the candidates of the majority honestly and fairly nominated.

It has been declared by opponents of LaFollette that while he carried the primary idea to ultimate success, the credit of launching the movement in Wisconsin should not be his; that his first introduction to the primary idea was the Lewis primary bill, introduced in the Wisconsin legislature in 1897, and that he did not urge

primary reform until a year later. In the interest of historical truth it may here be said that the Lewis bill—the first thorough primary bill introduced in Wisconsin—was drawn under Mr. LaFollette's directions by his law partners, S. A. Harper and A. G. Zimmerman, while LaFollette was himself writing his Chicago speech. It was introduced by Assemblyman Lewis of Racine.

LaFollette now had something concrete on which to base his war on the "machine," and a definite issue and program of his own to offer in place of the outgrown practices then prevailing. Finding it necessary to look to the plain people for his support, he proceeded to sow his propaganda among them and await the harvest his faith foresaw. Here then began what may be called another seven years' war, a campaign that was to continue practically unbroken until the fateful, decisive election night of November, 1904.

An interesting and significant incident of this year deserves notice. Realizing that LaFollette and his cause were rapidly in the ascendancy, some new course to divert or unhorse him seemed imperative to the old organization leaders. Fighting him would no longer do; he was becoming too strong. It was thought perhaps a fat federal job might quiet him; many other recalcitrants had been eliminated in this way. LaFollette was poor and had no organization or connections of wealth behind him. He was paying his own expenses while spreading his doctrine. So President McKinley was prevailed upon to offer him the post of comptroller of the treasury. The salary was \$6,000. Acceptance would have shelved him effectively and retarded, if not shriveled up, the reform movement in Wisconsin. The proffer was made by Senator Spooner, but was promptly declined by LaFollette. Previous to that time LaFollette had also declined an Indian territory judgeship. He had found himself; his

path lay clear before him and no charm nor temptation could now swerve him from it.

Invited to give the independence oration July 5 that year at Mineral Point, LaFollette gave an address based largely upon his "Menace-of-the-Machine" speech made previously at Chicago, but in which he also discussed state issues in aggressive fashion and attacked the state administration's attitude on corporation and taxation questions. August 20 of the same year he gave practically the same address before a gathering of county republican clubs at Fern Dell, Sauk county. This address became famous as the "Fern Dell speech." In part the speaker said:

The existence of the corporation as we have it today was not dreamt of by the fathers. It has become all-pervasive; has invaded all departments of business, all activities of life. By their number and power and the consolidation oft-times of many into one, corporations have practically acquired dominion over the business world. The effect is revolutionary and cannot be over-estimated. The individual as a business factor is disappearing, his place being taken by many under corporate rule. The business man and artisan of the past gave to his business an individual stamp and reputation, making high mental worth an essential element of business life. Gathered in corporate employ men become mere cogs in the wheels of complicated mechanism. The corporation is a machine for making money, demanding of its employes only obedience and service, reducing men to the status of privates in the regular army.

It is but just to say that no legislature has assembled in Wisconsin in many years containing so many good men as the last. But when a bill to punish corrupt practices in campaigns and elections is destroyed by amendment; when measures such as the Davidson bills requiring corporations to pay a just share of the taxes go down in defeat; when bills to compel hundreds of millions of dollars of untaxed personal property to come from its hiding place and help maintain government fail of adequate support; when rerublicans and democrats unite in defeating the Hall resolution to emancipate the legislature from all subserviency to the corporations by prohibiting acceptance of railroad passes, telegraph and express company franks; when these things and many others of like character happen and are made matters of public

record which no man may deny, then that man is untrue to his country, his party and himself who will not raise his voice in condemnation—not in condemnation of the principles of the political party in which he believes, or of the great body of its organization, but of the men who betray it and of the methods by which they control, only to prostitute it to base and selfish ends.

The remedy is to begin at the bottom and make one supreme effort for victory over the present bad system. Nominate and elect men who will pass a primary election law which will enable the voter to select directly candidates without intervention of caucus or convention or domination of machines. Thus may a permanent reform greater even than the reform effected by the Australian ballot which has so revolutionized the conduct of elections be brought about. Apply the method of the Australian ballot as embodied in the Cooper law to the primary election and let it take the place of both the caucus and convention. Furnish the primary election booth with ballots as under the Australian system and print on the ballot for each party the names of the different candidates proposed for its nominee as candidates for judicial offices are now proposed; provide for the selection of a committee to represent each party organization and promulgate the party platform through such committee composed of a party committeeman elected by and for the voters of each party in every assembly district of the state. Provide severe penalties for any violation of the primary election law. Prohibit corrupt influences in or about the election booth and insure an honest count and return the votes as cast. Provide that each man receiving the highest number of votes cast in the ballot box of his party for the office for which he is a candidate shall be the nominee of that party in the general election to follow. In short pass such a measure as the Lewis primary election bill. Under this system you will destroy the machine because you destroy the caucus and convention system through which the machine controls party nominations. You will place the nominations directly in the hands of the people. You will restore to every state in the union the government given to this people by the God of nations.

LaFollette's advocacy of the Australian ballot recalls the interesting fact that he was probably beaten because of this very instrumentality in the only election in which he failed as a candidate at the polls—that of 1890. LaFollette has often been beaten in caucuses where popular expression has been limited, but only once in the free

field of an election. In the election of 1890 it was generally expected that LaFollette would be returned to congress, and the friends of the democratic candidate, A. R. Bushnell, in conducting a still hunt for him, as a rule, conceded this, and asked support for their candidate on complimentary grounds, thus gaining many votes they might otherwise have lost. In the election that year the republican vote in Dane county alone fell off about 1,300 from that of 1888, while the democratic gain was very slight. Had the full republican vote been cast in Dane county LaFollette would have been re-elected. For instance, in the five heavy Norwegian precincts in southeastern Dane county—Christiana, Dunkirk, Pleasant Springs, Rutland and Stoughton—the republican loss from the gubernatorial vote of 1888 was 338, nearly 70 to a precinct, while the democrats in the same five precincts actually lost 11 votes, the democratic vote in 1888 being 481 while in 1890 it was 470. It is said that in the town of Pleasant Springs nearly 70 voters who came to the polls did not vote, largely because of a disinclination to marking their ballots which then for the first time was required under the Cooper (Australian ballot) law.

It was LaFollette's bold attacks on the administration, the masterly vigor and aggressiveness of his speech, in general, foreshadowing, as it did, a grim continuation of the party warfare of the year before, that made the address significant and made him again the cynosure of all political eyes. The press of the state was agitated and pretty generally took sides for or against LaFollette. His personality and motives became the subject of wide newspaper discussion. His address at the state fair at Milwaukee early in September was featured in full by the *Milwaukee Sentinel* at the time.

Under the heading, "Wisconsin's Political Reformer," the *Chicago Times-Herald*, September 27, of that year, contained the following interesting study of him:

Robert Marion LaFollette has taken upon himself the herculean task of stemming the advance of corrupt political machine domination in Wisconsin state affairs. Propriety compels the resurrection of the word reformer to classify him.

Today LaFollette is the most conspicuous figure in the Badger commonwealth. He is a machine smasher of the John Maynard Harlan type. He is resolved to show the seamy side of present political conditions, and he is succeeding. Other men have tried to do so before. They have been gathered to their fathers. Naught remains of their endeavors save the memory of their failures. LaFollette is going about the work in a way peculiar to himself. Up and down the state he is marching preaching his doctrine to the common people. His voice is heard and Wisconsin political affairs are being shaken from center to circumference. Like the fabled opossum, who, when he spied the unerring gunner from his gum tree, said "It's no use, major; I'll come down," so the bosses of all parties, the men of all shades of political beliefs and unbeliefs, have come down to the level of being interested enough to assume a listening attitude. None of them but admits that the weapon is loaded. None of them denies that the aim is straight. All of them impugn the motives of the man with the gun. All of them agree that the time is inopportune for pulling the trigger.

The proportions attained by the LaFollette crusade for greater purity in politics are due solely and alone to the man himself. Others might have said what he is saying and their words would have passed unnoticed. Into the campaign has been injected the whole of a remarkable personality, a personality so vastly different from that of any other that an attempt to compare it is not comparison, but contrast. LaFollette's personal force and individuality command attention.

He is a natural leader of men. He got this trait from an ancestry that was descended from that iron race of hunters and explorers who were living along the highways of the west when France handed over 10,000 people and several future states to the English beyond the Alleghanies. This life of LaFollette was begun in a log cabin on a Dane county farm forty-two years ago. Till his eighteenth year his time was divided between farm work and attendance upon the district school. Indomitable pluck and persistence, to this day his predominant characteristics, enabled him to work his way through a university course. He was graduated from the state university in 1879, and after a year of study in the law school was admitted to the bar. Two terms as district attorney of Dane county and three terms in congress as repre-

sentative of the old third Wisconsin district make the sum total of Mr. LaFollette's official career. When in congress he served on the ways and means committee with President McKinley, and to him was allotted no small portion of the task of drafting the famous protective tariff bill.

LaFollette's college career was that of a leader among his fellows. A signal triumph marked his senior year, when he was the winner of the interstate oratorical contest. His subject was "Iago," one for which he had a natural taste. His oration represented something more than a conglomeration of words. It was an original, terse and critical interpretation of Iago, and it brought from Edwin Booth the declaration that from it he had gained a new conception of that character. The oration was delivered with a force and power that brought the audience completely to the speaker and everybody concurred in the unanimous decision of the judges that the golden badge of honor be awarded him. His secret of his success was his earnestness. It is the same earnestness that now makes it possible for him to bring to see from his point of view men who before hearing were set against him with faces of flint. It is not through his eloquence that he captures the people. Neither does he pander to their passion, nor play upon their ignorance. But he has the quality of making men believe that he is sincere. LaFollette proposes nothing that is new. He suggests no great changes in the common or the statute law of the land. He simply tells his hearers to see to it through the means of the ballot box that the men they select for public servants shall be subservient to them and to them alone; that they shall not fall down and worship in meek and humble obeisance at the shrine of the political machine or the corporation.

For his "heresy" in enunciating such propositions he has in the last two months endured more personal abuse than falls to the lot of most men. His every utterance has been the brunt of criticism. His motives have been impugned, his methods attacked, but his statements have gone unchallenged. The opposition he has encountered has, if anything, made him the more determined. He expected it. He had reason to expect it. While no man in the state has a more devoted following, no man in the state has more bitter enemies. His whole life has been an uphill fight. But to him impossibilities are unknown. His genius is, as Beecher said, talent well worked. He knows that he may be checked for the time, but he feels sure that success will come in the end. Six years ago when the portals of a great career were open to him, he had the courage to quarrel with a man who for a score of years had held sway over the political ambitions of all men from

Lake Superior on the north to Illinois on the south, from the Mississippi to Lake Michigan. The breach was a serious one and could never be healed. Everybody said it sounded the deathknell of the little Madisonian. That never again would he be heard of. They did not know LaFollette. Other men would have sulked in their tents. He went into the fight. Always consistent in his political beliefs, he fought for his party in every campaign. His voice was given to expounding its doctrine, though often he knew that every added success of its leaders was another stone in the wall that was hemming from view his own personal ambitions.

A year ago Mr. LaFollette announced himself a candidate for governor. The men who for years had shaped the policy of the party to which he swore fealty did not shake their heads and say that it would never do. They did not think they had to. And so the campaign was begun. After a while there was a rumor of an intimation that the Madison man was making a hard fight. This did not worry the machine leaders. They had been in hard fights before and had come out unscarred. Soon the caucuses were held. Men who had never before attended the primaries began to exercise their prerogatives as citizens. The local leaders found it difficult to manipulate their own precincts. Farmers drove for miles to vote for LaFollette delegates. Notice of these things came to the center of machine domination. When the leaders opened their eyes they found that a new machine had sprung up while they were basking in the sunshine of their own security. It was a machine that differed in every respect from the kind they had heretofore waged against. It was a machine that urged voting before the nomination of candidates as well as after the convention had been held. It was a machine that recognized every man as a sovereign. It appealed for votes for men because of what they had done, not because of what they intended to do. It emphasized the equal rights of all under the law, and swore allegiance to no one set of men. The old machine girded on its armor to give it battle. All of the intrigues of long political experience were brought into play. All of the prowess that it wielded by virtue of its control was turned against the advancing host. The new machine was defeated but not driven back. When the tiger-strife was ended the leader of the new power joined hands with the old machine in giving battle to a common enemy.

Since that memorable struggle of "Bob" LaFollette, he is said to have a genius for organization. He is a strong believer in the power of printer's ink. Into every hamlet and village of the state he sent the platform upon which he based the request for suffrage. Round about him in his Madison office he gathered

his friends and told them what to do. His was the master mind that directed it all. He had no money to spend. He would not have spent it if he had had it. He made no promises of office in event of his success. Yet day after day his fold of supporters grew. Men who were opposed to him came to see him. When they left they were his friends. If they made a second visit it was to bring others. These, too, left vowing that he was the man of their choice. In some cases this result was brought about by reason of the principles represented by LaFollette. Most often it was brought about by the personality of the man himself. *

LaFollette never forgets a name or a face. He meets many men. Some of them forget him. He always remembers them. It is said Caesar knew every man in his army. James G. Blaine had the same faculty of memory. It is a power in itself. It appeals to the vanity of men to know that in all the rush of politics they have not been forgotten. Added to this is a charm of personality indescribable. LaFollette knows how to meet and deal with men. All his life he has been a close student of human nature. He makes up his mind quickly as to the worth of a man. Long experience has taught him to read aright in most cases. His handshake is a grip that at once establishes a fellowship. It is not affected. It is the same on every occasion of meeting. It is given to all friends whether they be great or small, rich or poor. The man is essentially democratic in his tastes. He deals neither in obsequious flattery nor vulgar sycophancy. He looks men straight in the eyes and talks to them slowly, deliberately, earnestly. His intense individuality compels magnetic response.

He uses much the same methods on the stump as in private conversation. He emphasizes every point with gestures. He takes men right into the narrow circle of his exclusive attention. Every man believes that the orator is talking directly to him. It is this power that has made LaFollette foremost among the jury lawyers of the state. He is always courteous in answering questions, yet the man who tries to play upon his credulity finds him ready in repartee, with a score of strings for his bow.

Mr. LaFollette is a poor man, but despite his many reverses his life has been a singularly happy and genial one. The year he began the practice of his profession he was married to Miss Belle Case, who had been his classmate in the university and to whom upon graduation was awarded the Lewis prize for the best commencement oration. Besides her university course Mrs. LaFollette was graduated from the university law school, being the first woman to receive a diploma from that institution. The LaFollette home is on the shore of Lake Monona. It is the house

of a scholar, a student and a husband and a wife of letters. Here and there and everywhere are books. LaFollette is an omnivorous reader. He knows Hamlet almost by heart. His family, consisting of one daughter and two little sons, is a most happy and congenial one, and every hour that the father is away is a sacrifice.

This is Robert Marion LaFollette, reformer, leader of the new regime in Wisconsin political affairs.

From the state fair LaFollette entered upon a round of county fair speeches, a practice of "following-the-ponies" which was to be kept up for years and which was to prove one of the most effective of propagandic agencies.

A study by the *Milwaukee Journal* of the LaFollette style of oratory at the time may also be of interest now. It reads:

Ex-Congressman Robert M. LaFollette of Madison, as an agricultural fair orator, is far and away ahead of the usual run of speakers who accept invitations to make that sort of address. Whatever purpose he may have had in view in starting in on the tour of county fairs at which he has spoken this fall, his vigorous oratory can not have failed to have left its impression on his hearers.

Below the ordinary height, he is compactly built, and has a square, almost massive face, when his stature is considered, and his head is covered with a thick, almost shaggy, growth of dark brown hair. He is not a commanding figure by any means, but rather impresses one who sees him for the first time as possessed of a solidity and a bulldog determination. But he is a trained and impressive speaker and knows how to use hands, arms and body as well as words.

When brought before his audience he measures at one sweeping glance the entire assemblage. He moves rather sluggishly at first, but is not long in getting warmed up, and he remains warmed up all through his speech even if it covers two hours. This intense and continued display of energy is one of the strong characteristics of the man, as expressed in his work as a public speaker, and it rarely fails to bring his hearers to him and to hold their attention.

In most speakers such a vast expenditure of energy in the delivery of an oration would become stale and tiresome. But LaFollette is infinite in facial expression and gesture. Even much

of his solidly knit frame is brought into play. Perhaps the secret of his success as an orator is the fact of the singular appropriateness of each motion intended to emphasize his expressed thought. They harmonize. Does he describe the horrors of the civil war and the fratricidal strife that nearly rent in twain the greatest people on earth, his face becomes awful in its expression of the very feeling with which he is attempting to impress his hearers. When he refers to the return of peace and prosperity, after the years of strife and bloodshed, with arms raised and hands open as in benediction, his face wears an expression lit up with the glad brightness of the picture he is drawing. And so all through. He denounces the crushing greed and overbearing insolence and corruption of the corporations and the firm set lines of his face, the tightly clenched hands and the whole attitude of the man are those of a just judge denouncing the iniquity that he has discovered. Coming to the picture of the remedy applied and the citizens of the republic again awake and alert to all the responsibilities of citizenship, the face glows with patriotic pride and the arms describe with almost majestic sweep of the open palms and victory of the people and their cause.

And Mr. LaFollette is sometimes sarcastic. His words bite like coals of fire; but his face and gestures are unique. Here, as in other phases, they harmonize, and with his head slightly lowered, his shock of brown hair overtopping the face and the right arm extended, the index finger pointing apparently at the very object of his attack, there is a certain fine frenzy in the man that few public speakers can use to such advantage. Again he will refer to the noble men that have made history in this country in past years as a heritage of which Americans should be proud, and with clenched fists and uplifted arms, he seems to hold that precious heritage aloft and gazing at it with open mouth and upturned eyes, invite his hearers to see in substance the very thing his fancy has painted.

Disgust, hope, honor, avarice, despair, love, anger, all the passions of man, he paints in strong words and still stronger gestures. This may sound like exaggeration—but into the most commonplace of his word paintings he throws the energy of a man apparently fully impressed with the whole force and truth of his statements. He never wearies and he will not allow his audience to weary. He carries his subject and his hearers both, and compels the latter to listen, if he can not compel them to endorse what he may say.

There is no joke, nothing frivolous. He is in earnest and gives himself up wholly to the work he is doing. It is serious

work to him and while he may not possess the finish of some of the noted orators of the day, he certainly does possess their force. He raises his right arm and with open palm there rolls from it rather than from his lips the statement he is making. In his left he carries the notes always carefully prepared from which his speech flows as readily as it does from the mouth of the most accomplished extemporaneous speaker. With most speakers the presence in one hand of a written speech is a considerable drawback. LaFollette uses it as an effective weapon. It seems to give added accuracy and precision to his statements. He goes to it for inspiration and does not in any sense occupy the time and the patience of his hearers by referring to it. He seems never to lose his place. He uses the written sheet as a man would use a club in a fight. He holds it out before his audience, grasping it tightly in his left hand, and with the fingers of his right hand he taps it impressively, and no one dreams it is not a part of the idea he is advancing.

Mr. LaFollette is a study. It may be that you do not agree with him either in premises or conclusions. But it can not be denied that he impresses even the unbelievers among his hearers that he believes himself and believes in the truth and force of his statements. Perhaps this concentration of every power in the man to impress his hearers with his sincerity is a stage trick, but it is well played and beyond detection. It is real and full of life and vitality and with the average man who hears Robert M. LaFollette it is impossible to arrive at any other conclusion than that he takes himself seriously.

Near the conclusion of his speech as he folds his arms across his chest with the air of a man who has done all that can be done, and in a quiet and impressive way delivers his peroration, there is a wonderful change. It is a change that does not detract from your opinion of the orator, but rather adds to it. You realize then that he has been speaking a long time. He has tired you out, but you did not know it before. However, he does not seem to have become weary himself. As he bows for the last time and withdraws he seems as fresh as ever. You are impressed with the belief that the man is a sort of steam engine. He is iron in the sense that iron conveys the idea of endurance.

Robert M. LaFollette is certainly a study.

The county fairs over LaFollette continued his propagandic work, speaking wherever his political or old university friends could obtain for him a hall, a schoolhouse or a church.

One night he was scheduled to speak at the village of Argyle in Lafayette county, where he had spent some of his boyhood years. Part of this period—after his mother had returned to Primrose—he had lived at the home of a family named Hawley. After these years he was now again a guest at the Hawley home. It is reported that as a boy he sometimes tried the patience of the good Mrs. Hawley by his exuberance of spirits and a tendency to mischief, but a corresponding tendency toward contrition for his pranks made it impossible for her to harbor anything but a fleeting impatience. On this occasion Mr. and Mrs. Hawley occupied a front seat and as the speaker warmed to his flights Mr. Hawley nudged his wife and asked, “Well, what do you think of the boy now?”

“Why, it’s all right,” said the hard-headed lady, “if he only means what he says.”

The next morning at breakfast her former young charge asked Mrs. Hawley:

“Well, Auntie, how did you like my speech last night?”

“Why, it was very fine, Robert,” she replied, “but did you mean it?”

“Oh, now, Auntie,” he continued, “how can you be so cruel as to ask such a question?”

“Well,” she replied, “I happen to remember how you used to promise not to get into mischief again.”

These meetings were not without their incidents. Of one such the following account by one B. J. Daly is given. Written a decade and a half afterward, it shows the vivid impression made by the new political evangelist upon his hearers at the time:

I think it was in 1897 that I first heard of LaFollette or heard him speak. It was at a county fair in this city and was shortly after Mr. LaFollette had made sensational charges against Senator Sawyer, who at that time was the great dominating factor in republican politics in Wisconsin.

Mr. LaFollette spoke from a farm wagon which stood on the race track in front of the grandstand. The grandstand was packed with people, who were anxious to hear this modern David, just going forth to battle with the giants, and incidentally to witness the horse races. For some reason he was late in beginning and evidently the hour assigned to the races in the printed program came shortly after LaFollette began to speak. Some confusion was caused by the horsemen speeding their horses by the grandstand and disturbing the speaker. After this had gone on for a while, Mr. LaFollette stopped in his address and turning to the men causing the disturbance he told them that he had been given a certain length of time to speak and that he proposed to use that time. He said that he was late in beginning through no fault of his and that any time lost by noise or disturbance would be deducted from their time and not from his. It was a bold bluff, but effective, and there was no further disturbance. Oshkosh may have been hostile territory for Mr. LaFollette, but one thing is sure, that audience was clearly with him and he was cheered to the echo.

I have heard a good many political speeches before and since, but that was the first time I had ever heard a man attack his own party and point out the sins it had been guilty of. Always before that time it was the other party that was scored and advised to clean house. But LaFollette specifically and in detail told how the will of the people was being defeated by his party bosses and he invited the people of all parties in, to see how the machine worked and to watch the wheels go around, and explained how he proposed to improve things. He told his plan for a primary election law, then an entirely new idea, and so far as I can learn, original with LaFollette.

The speech made a profound and lasting impression on me, and doubtless on most of those who heard it, and convinced me of the man's perfect honesty. I went away in a dazed condition. I could not realize that this man, who scored the republican party bosses, was himself a republican, seeking republican support. And to the everlasting honor of the republican party in Wisconsin, be it said, he got that support. All the world loves a lover, it is said, and it is equally true that all the world loves a brave man, and certainly none but a brave man would have undertaken the mighty task which LaFollette had undertaken and which he was just beginning.

I was a democrat, and always before that time I had gone away from hearing a republican speech more of a democrat than ever. But here was a man who spoke to me as a citizen, not as a

partisan. He did not attack either party as a party; he attacked the bad in both parties, especially in his own. Do you wonder men were impressed?

A most unusual thing about his speech was the bold way in which he named the leaders of his party who were responsible for the corrupt practices he complained of. No gumshoe methods for LaFollette. Everything said was open and above board. No hints nor glittering generalities for him.

Since then I have listened to him often and have been in the audience when he attacked the political records of candidates of his own party in their own community with the candidates attacked sitting there on the platform with him. And yet we have been told by his enemies that he is not sincere.

Well, maybe not, but those are not the ways of a double-dealer nor an insincere man. Surely if he is not honest he dissembles well.



LaFollette Farm Home, Maple Bluff,
Madison, Wis.

CHAPTER VII

Albert R. Hall and His Work.

A STRONG, HEROIC CHARACTER—HIS LONG FIGHT FOR ANTI-PASS AND RAILROAD TAX LEGISLATION—THE PASS AND ITS EVILS—SIGNIFICANT REFERENDUM VOTE ON RAILROAD REGULATION.

A SPARE, swarthy man, angular in appearance, and a veteran of the civil war, appeared in the legislature from one of the northern counties in 1891, the year in which LaFollette retired from congress. It was not his first experience in legislative work; he had, in fact, already served as speaker of the Minnesota assembly—later removing to Wisconsin—but this fact was not known to many of his colleagues, who little guessed as they eyed him askance that this modest, serious and industrious fellow member was soon to be the commanding figure of the house and to bring down upon his head a storm that was to shake the state to its farthest limit.

This man was Albert R. Hall, and his appearance was prophetic of the new order of things that was coming into being. Hall was the statesman of the hour immediately preceding the LaFollette movement, the strongest and most influential individual force in the state in preparing the public mind for the revolution to come and deserves early and distinct consideration by the student of this period. Possessed of the zealot's faith, far-seeing, patient, incorruptible, undismayed by failure, he was the proverbial man for the time when defeat, derision, misunderstanding, might be the expected portion.

He had given deep thought to the necessity for a change in the practice and substance of legislation and on coming to the assembly promptly took steps to put an end to one of the great prevailing abuses by introducing a stringent anti-pass bill, following this in time

with a measure to require the railroads to pay a larger share of taxes, and with bills for the creation of a railroad commission. It has been customary with the opponents of LaFollette to deny him any credit for the passage of the anti-pass law and the rebuilding of the taxation scheme of the state on its present superior basis, the distinction of the initiation of these reforms being given to Mr. Hall. How much each of these borrowed from or lent each other is, however, a mere quibble beside the great fact that they both urged these reforms and worked in admirable harmony and co-operation until Mr. Hall's death. Hall always gave LaFollette a large measure of credit. Had he chosen he might have built to his own political advantage on these claims, but Hall was not the kind of man to do this. Too great a patriot to be self-seeking; too just to withhold from any man his deserts, he declared that all considerations of justice and political wisdom demanded that LaFollette be placed in party command, and refusing all proffers of support for the governorship he espoused the LaFollette cause and became himself a follower in the ranks. Also when encouraged to become a candidate for United States senator, he replied: "I am not the man to send to the senate. My work as a legislator at Madison taxes my capacity. We must send LaFollette to the senate."

In view of the great influence the railroads had acquired in the political life of the state following the defeat of the granger movement, Hall set himself a great undertaking in determining to try conclusions with a lobby that had grown increasingly strong and arrogant with time.

So potent had the representatives of the so-called "third house"—particularly the railroad representatives—become that they were often regarded as the real big men of the legislatures and were better known than the majority of the lawmakers themselves. They were

courted and dined; members deferred to them and sought their counsel and approval in all things of consequence. Lavishly equipped apartments were maintained by them. The names of few legislators of those days are now remembered, but those of the lobbyists Ring, Wiswall, Luscombe and Cheney survive. Commenting on the lobby power of old, August Roden of the *Wisconsin State Journal* said editorially in January, 1911:

Pity the poor lobbyist! He can find no place to lay his head in Madison, in or out of the legislature. None so poor now to do him honor. Time was when the lobbyist walked the boards of the Park hotel a king. When he would see a member he did not, as a servile hireling, go upon the floor of the chamber from which he is now so brutally excluded, but sent for his member; and his member came. Indeed it was seldom that he had to send for a member, for early and late members thronged his headquarters to learn the fate of their individual measures or receive instructions, or, if the lobbyist were representing a railroad company, to receive passes.

The writer remembers distinctly the feeling of awe inspired by his first view of a real lobbyist in the Park hotel during a session of the legislature a score or more of years ago. The lobbyist in question, now returned to the bosom of his family and to a life of peace and honor, was passing on his way through the crowd to his apartments on the second floor. Apparently all who were in the hotel were there to see him and he stopped frequently to distribute from a large pocketbook railroad passes. He had the haughty, chesty air of a circus ticket vender and seemed to resent the request of the humble members who asked for favors. But now Ichabod is his name for the glory has departed from his realm.

The free pass was the great agency through which the railroads exercised their powerful sway over the legislators and the public and it was not until the pass was abolished that the grip of the railroads upon the state was to a degree finally broken. A former assemblyman once said to A. H. Dahl, later state treasurer: "When I was in the legislature about all we could do was to take care of passes." Commenting on this statement, Mr. Dahl said:

I know this was true although I never used railroad passes myself. When first elected to the assembly I was sent the customary bunch for myself and family with the understanding also that there were unlimited quantities for my friends, but I felt that the growing sentiment against the pass practice was right and returned mine with thanks, although I have no doubt that I thereby become unpopular with some of my constituents. Many men who disapproved of passes were practically obliged to get them for their friends and supporters.

Former Governor James O. Davidson also said: "I was obliged to maintain a ledger in order to keep track of the 800 or more passes for which I had requests. This duty became such a nuisance and left me so little time for other work that I finally became disgusted and shut off the whole pass business so far as I was concerned."

A Madison citizen who was a student in the University at the time says: "It happened that the stenographer of Ring, the Northwestern lobbyist, was a friend of mine and one day he invited me up to Ring's headquarters at the Park hotel. I went up and found the stenographer busy in a front office mailing out passes, while in an inner office Ring himself was handing them out to members as they came in at one door and went out of another. Ring's room also was well stocked up with a lavish layout of fine cigars and other good things to which visitors helped themselves.

" 'Do they all get passes?' I asked my friend.

" 'All but Hall and a few others who refuse to take them.'

" 'And how many do they get?'

" 'Oh, we usually give them what they want, but here's a fellow (from Milwaukee) who wants forty-five, so that he can take all his friends up to the northern lakes. That's pretty strong, though.'

" 'Well they can't vote independently on measures if they accept favors like that, can they?' I asked.

" 'No,' replied my friend, 'I don't think they do.'

"That set me thinking and I went away from there an anti-pass, LaFollette man."

Besides influencing the judgments and votes of public officers, the pass had the further evil effect of dissipating energy and interest in the work of legislation. With transportation costing nothing, adjournments were continually being taken from Friday to Tuesday that the members might spend the intervening time in travel or upon private business at their homes.

This made the situation particularly trying to the more conscientious members who used no passes. If they lived at any distance from Madison they could not go home because of the expense and time involved.

"About all we could do," said one such member, "was to lie around Madison and swear three or four days a week. We could get no committee meetings nor do anything. While the other members were having a good time attending to their private affairs the framing of bills was left to the lobbyists and attorneys of special interests, who were perfectly willing to spare the law-makers this work."

The energy and relentlessness with which Hall had pressed the anti-pass issue in the preceding campaign, combined with the Seofield cow exposure, and the platform declaration of the party, made it apparent to the legislature of 1899 that anti-pass legislation could no longer be safely deferred. As usual, Hall presented his anti-pass bill, but so difficult was it to obtain action upon it that it was feared it would again fail. Whenever and wherever it was brought up all sorts of grotesque motions and amendments would be offered to delay action, in order that passes might be used to the end of the session. One would exempt sheriffs, another notaries, another legislators; one would postpone the date when the law should go into effect; one ask delay because of the absence of some member, etc. In the meantime

the members and their families and other favored persons enjoyed the pass privilege to the utmost. But the bill was finally pushed through to the statute books. It should be noted, however, that it was the last law enacted at the session and was not approved until May 3, 1899.

Hall had to pay the patriot's price for carrying on the battle for the people. For years he was subjected to unmeasured scorn and ridicule by the bulk of the press of the state and his own fellow legislators. Prospective members of the legislature would be told by their older fellows that they would find on coming to Madison a queer, gaunt, seedy-looking old man named Hall, with a squeaky voice. He had many crank notions, they would be informed, and they must look out for him. It was, of course, unfortunate that the party should be saddled with such men, they would say, but it had to be tolerated. It seems almost unbelievable at this day, yet the prejudice against him came to such a pass that whenever Hall rose to speak it was made an occasion for general laughter and sneers, and one member once introduced a resolution to have Hall appointed a committee of one to reform the state of Wisconsin. Another legislator afterwards confessed that it took him years to overcome his prejudice and that he did not do so until it occurred to him one day to give serious attention to a speech by the anti-railroad crusader. When Hall had concluded this fellow legislator had completely changed his attitude toward him. He declared that Hall was correct in his views, and from that time he was a strong supporter of the statesman from Dunn.

This speech which exerted so great an influence upon a fellow member, by the way, occupied a whole afternoon and was one of the most memorable ever heard in a Wisconsin legislative chamber. It dealt with the subject of railroad taxation and was compact with facts and

statistics, the result of years of deep and patient study by its author. Little divining the powerful reserve ammunition Hall was treasuring up, his opponents had made a number of shallow and sarcastic arguments against his measures which gave him the desired opportunity to unlimber his powerful batteries of argument and invective and shatter like eggshells the half-baked objections of the railroad apologists.

Former Governor J. O. Davidson is authority for the statement that Hall spent nearly \$2,000 during the legislative session of 1895 for printing and postage in making an educational campaign for his anti-pass and railroad commission measures. One of the notable things done by him at that session was to bring about a practical statewide referendum on his measures at the spring elections that year. While his bills were pending in the legislature Hall conceived the idea that a powerful influence in their favor might be exerted were a popular vote taken on them at town meetings. Accordingly, on his own responsibility, he prepared ballots and a day or two before election he sent them to as many town clerks throughout the state as he could, requesting that they be used as an expression of public sentiment on the question of railroad regulation. All this work was done in secret and unknown to the opponents of his measures. Mr. Hall was assisted by Mr. Davidson and Joseph Smet-hurst, a legislative clerk, the three men working with almost heart-breaking energy for several days and nights to get the material into the mails. Mr. Hall's faith was abundantly justified by the returns on his referendum, a total of some 50,000 votes being reported for his measures, with only about 700 votes against them. This expression was later to prove a powerful weapon in the hands of Mr. Hall.

"While Mr. Hall had strong faith in the ultimate triumph of his reforms," said Davidson, "he was at

times blue and dejected at his many defeats. 'Don't ruin your health for these things,' he once said to me; 'you will find it unprofitable and disappointing in the long run.' "

It required the highest loyalty to principle to make such a fight as Hall led in those days. The railroads could flood the legislature with passes and favors, while the slender band of the supporters of public interests could offer no reward except ridicule and the consciousness of duty well done.

It is now interesting history that such a man was obliged to go hawking his anti-pass resolution from state convention to state convention and from legislature to legislature only to meet with defeat and ridicule for years.

Hall hailed from near the little town of Knapp in Dunn county where in the isolation of the woods he led a quiet, almost recluse, bachelor's life, giving his chief attention when not in the public service to the raising of goats and other livestock on a large farm. When he was serving his second term in the legislature a new railroad map of the state was issued from the railroad commissioner's office. On inspection it was found that the town of Knapp had been left "off the map." Whether or not this was done at the suggestion of the railroads as a "cut" at Hall for his anti-railroad activity was never determined but "the gentleman from Dunn" had to bear considerable twitting as a result.

As illustrating this austere patriot's severe sense of independence the following story was told by John W. Groves, later assistant superintendent of public property: One evening Mr. Groves entered a barber shop at Madison in a great hurry to get shaved and offered a man already in a chair a quarter for his place. At this a quiet man who sat at a nearby table and whose turn was due interrupted with, "If you are going to

tear off your shirt for a shave you can have my place." Mr. Groves did not know the man who had extended him this courtesy, but thanked him, obtained his shave and handing the barber a half dollar said, "Give that man a good shave and take it out of this for his waiting." When the accommodating stranger, who later proved to be Mr. Hall, had obtained his shave and proffered his pay he was informed that Mr. Groves, the man who preceded him in the chair, had paid for it, whereupon he burst into a passion, delivering a homily to the barber on the stultification of being put under obligations to others and forced him to take a second fee.

Mr. Hall's character and services have been fitly immortalized in a bronze tablet to his memory set in the assembly chamber of the capitol.

He is the only man whom the state has so far seen fit to thus honor. Were this tablet to be inscribed with any tributary legend, but one word would need be written, "Incorruptible." This designation, the highest tribute the ancients could bestow on their heroes, is likewise the people's estimate of the character of Albert R. Hall.

CHAPTER VIII

Campaign of 1898.

LaFOLLETTE AGAIN A CANDIDATE TO KEEP PRINCIPLES ALIVE—
A. R. HALL ATTACKS SCOFIELD—GOVERNOR'S COW BECOMES
FAMOUS—STIRRING CONVENTION BATTLE—SCOFIELD RENOMINATED.

THAT Governor Scofield and the old party organization would again have a serious fight in 1898 to continue in power had been foreshadowed in LaFollette's crusading round in the fall of 1897. The radical difference in point of view of the two elements was also shown in the fact that so far from sharing the anti-corporation sentiments of LaFollette, Governor Scofield in his first message to the legislature in 1897 devoted but seventeen lines to the "railroad question" and simply congratulated the people of the state on the pleasant relations existing between them and the roads.

But there were other signs. Governor Scofield had vetoed the so-called Davidson bills for the taxation of express and sleeping car companies. This action precipitated a great and acrimonious controversy, scarcely merited by these bills which were not very thoroughgoing, at least as compared with the measures in their original form. As first presented by Mr. Davidson the measures had some "teeth" in them, but after Davidson had succeeded in putting them through the assembly and had obtained a favorable committee report in the senate one senator solemnly asked that the bills be rereferred to the committee before coming to a vote. In courtesy to the senator (and to the express companies) they were so rereferred. Then, it is said, the legislative halls were flooded with express franks for the carrying of everything up to boats and live stock. When the bills reappeared out of committee they were badly emascu-

lated. Davidson then declared that he cared little for the measures as redrawn by the committee, but that they might have some value in establishing the principle of making the companies pay a small tax, and accordingly they were passed.

Friends of Governor Scofield have stated that he originally signed one of the bills, but that later, on the representation of M. G. Jeffris, assistant attorney general, he vetoed them, defending his action on the ground that they had been passed without a roll call. At any rate, his opponents charged that he gave the corporations rather than the people the benefit of the doubt.

He had also been silent on the pass evil against which A. R. Hall had been thundering since his first appearance in Madison. Accordingly in the spring of 1898 Hall wrote a series of fiery letters attacking Scofield. In a seathing communication printed in the *Milwaukee Sentinel*, May 21, Hall declared that the people of Wisconsin in town meetings in the spring of 1895 had voted 50,000 to 700 against free passes, and the convention of 1896 had adopted a resolution against the pass evil, yet instead of making such a recommendation to the legislature, he (Scofield) was pleased to inject into his message the following:

Railroads—The railroads of the state are closely identified with the development of our agricultural, commercial and manufacturing interests. Farmers, merchants, manufacturers, miners, and all classes of our people come daily into business relations with them and it is a cause for congratulation that the relations existing between the twenty or more railroads doing business within our borders and the people of the state are so generally harmonious.

In other letters in the *Janesville Republican* Hall asserted that Scofield had franked his cow from Oconto to Madison and then when the fact came to light had paid the bill ten months and seventeen days afterwards. In part the Hall phillipic read:

Major Scofield in accepting the nomination used these words: "I pledge you that I will not only stand upon that platform during the campaign, for the election, but if elected will stand firmly upon it during the full term of office." * * * "That Governor Scofield is responsible for the defeat of the pass legislation many familiar with the facts firmly believe. It is known that he used his influence with members to persuade them to vote against the resolution and that he denounced it as a 'd——d humbug.'"

Another gem in this now celebrated Janesville speech of our governor is the following:

"I wish there might be cultivated such a moral sentiment as will put to shame the man who will not perform his political duties and who for one cause or another shifts his burden of the expenses of government upon others."

It is conceded that transportation charges are a tax and if one man avoids in any way the payment of his transportation charges it is shifted upon another. So when the governor rides on a pass or ships his cow by express on a frank he "shifts his burden of the expenses of government upon others."

I submit to all republicans who believe that the pass evil should be abolished, and that the great corporations of the state should be made to pay their fair proportion of the burdens of government it will be but hollow mockery to renew its declaration on the pass question, if as its only pledge of good faith it renominates as standard bearer one who has betrayed his party and who is responsible for his party's betrayal of the people.

It may here be said that Scofield on his nomination in 1896 had declared that the platform of his party was his speech of acceptance and his pledge and that he would seek to carry it out in letter and spirit. He declared afterward, however, that in making that pledge he knew nothing about the Hall anti-pass resolution and that he made his promise upon an advance copy of the platform which had been shown him, and which did not contain the Hall resolution.

To lead the reform cause in the campaign that year it seemed to most politicians would be a vain and profitless sacrifice. The habit of renominating a governor after his first trial was one the people could not be expected to disregard without the greatest provocation.

Edward Scofield was governor. He was an old soldier, an experienced legislator and a man of different mettle than his predecessor. Unlike Governor Upham, he was not a man to be frightened off after one term. Besides he had the united support of the political machine, the railroads and the big corporations generally and had enlisted the press in his favor by an unprecedented number of appointments of editors to jobs. But he had proved a "corporation governor." He had vetoed the Davidson bills for the taxation of sleeping car and express companies, and the war against the form of administration exemplified in him had to go on. To forestall any misunderstanding and to gain such advantage as early action would give, Scofield announced his candidacy for a second time as early as April 21. LaFollette took the position that, victory or defeat, a stand should be taken for certain things simply because they were right; he was more concerned with principles than personal or party success, and at a meeting with some thirty of his leaders in Milwaukee had proposed a campaign for a platform alone, and without candidates; but they declared that such would be a fruitless course, as the efficiency and value of laws lie not so much in the statutes as in the men in authority and the spirit in which such men meet their obligations.

Who would make the sacrifice? No one coming forward, LaFollette was finally prevailed upon to take the nominal as well as the real leadership.

Previous to this other things of great import to Mr. LaFollette had transpired. On March 12, 1898, he delivered by invitation an address before the Good Government Club of the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor on "Primary Elections." This speech contained no new doctrine, nor did it differ materially from that which Mr. LaFollette had been preaching for a year, but being a polished and powerful elaboration and re-

ceiving wide publicity it attracted much attention and is justly ranked among LaFollette's great speeches. His graphic picture of the workings of a convention may be here given:

But let us follow this perversion of representative government to the very end. The time arrives for the meeting of the nominating convention. The delegates elected by the intermediate conventions go from every county to the place designated by the state central committee, nominally the supreme authority of the party. The gathering of delegates, of prominent politicians, of candidates and the friends of candidates, augmented by the multitude which contest always attracts, crowd the rooms and corridors of the hotels, and the streets of the city. Political workers, not elected as delegates, many of whom indeed have been defeated as delegates in the local caucuses and intermediate convention, arrive early and take active part in the real work of the nominating convention. Though they may have been rejected as untrustworthy representatives of the voters at home, they frequently exercise a controlling influence upon the action of the nominating convention, thus defeating the will of the majority that defeated them as delegates. They plunge at once into the contest and the commotion increases with their onset. Upon all sides men are hurrying to and fro. Glib talkers are heard in heated discussion. Others are quietly moving through the crowd, dropping significant remarks here and there, setting on certain ones to talk, starting rumors and roorbaeks, loosening the tongue of scandal and falsehood. Questioning, doubting, dealing in hints and innuendoes, raising false issues against one candidate, asserting that there is a division in the support of another, that it is reported that another has given up the contest and withdrawn, that another would be bolted by the Germans or Irish or Norwegians if nominated, and so on and on to the end of evil invention. Every hour the excitement increases. Investigation is baffled. Explanations are of no avail. There is no chance for argument. The truth is discounted. Statements are as good as facts.

The time approaches when the convention will meet. Away in some retired room behind locked doors the masters of the machine sit in quiet conference. They have issued their orders to those in nominal control. The program of the convention is all prepared. The temporary and permanent chairmen have been "elected" in advance, notified weeks ago and are present, each with an impromptu speech of acceptance in his little satchel. These men have been selected by the masters of the machine with

considerable judgment. There will be no mistakes made. Men designated in advance will be recognized by the chairman for all important motions at the "right time." All troublesome points of order will be promptly overruled. All motions will be decided in the "right way." These precautions have been found necessary even in the best governed machine conventions, for revolt against the rule of the machine is sometimes to be expected and always provided against. Nothing is overlooked here. There is no haste, no confusion. In the rooms of the delegates, in the wide corridors of the hotel below, out upon the street of the city, the excited mass may push and surge, parry and thrust, accuse and deny, hoot and cheer, but in this quiet corner all is harmonious and peaceful. And it is here that the work of the convention is being performed. Here that the combinations are affected, here that the deals, and bargains, and trades, and pledges, and promises of appointment, are being made, that will settle all the business of the convention at the appointed time.

Finally all is in readiness, the hour is at hand. The bands play. The delegations take their places under the waving banners, in the great convention hall. Thousands of spectators look down upon the scene from the lofty galleries. At last order and quiet prevails, but it is the tense quiet of suppressed excitement. The nerves are tingling, the pulses bounding. It is a powder magazine of powerfully restrained human emotions, a spark, a gesture, a word and an explosion follows.

The nominating speeches are made. With each presentation the supporting delegates cheer and applaud and stamp and wave fans and flags in a furious demonstration of endorsement. The convention becomes a scene of wild disorder. Men of serious and dignified deportment in life elamber over seats and rush back and forth, frantically shouting the names of their favorite candidates, until they finally cease from sheer exhaustion.

And this is a deliberative body of American citizens, engaged in the discharge of the gravest duty which can ever be committed to men, under a representative form of government! Immortal fathers who founded this republic! Let us believe that in the providence of God your eyes are veiled from this modern method of nominating candidates for the high trust of public service.

With the speechmaking at an end the balloting begins, but there is no lull in the storm. The announcement of the votes of each delegation is greeted with applause from time to time, rising above the confusion of the canvass carried on by the more active members of the convention as they rush their workers from one delegation to another in eager quest for votes. The result of the

ballot when declared, if not final, is the occasion for a storm of cheers from the adherents of the leading candidates. Then the balloting goes forward again.

The lightness of the obligation of the delegate to the voters he represents, now becomes manifest. Many who have withstood the blandishments and temptations of the canvass since their arrival, having recorded a vote for the choice of their constituencies, hope now to be able to do something for themselves, in the way of political preferment and rush wildly for the "loaded wagon." This is usually followed by a stampede which closes the contest and reveals the inherent weakness of a plan of representation wholly without responsibility.

The work of the convention is ended. The masters of the machine have had their way. The minority from their quiet corner in the hotel have ruled the great majority of the plain citizens of the state. The men named as candidates are the servants of the minority. They know their masters. They will serve them well. There may be anger. There may be disintegration threatened in the party. But the machine trusts to the white heat of the campaign to fuse the fragments and win the day. It has succeeded many times and they depend on high partisan feeling, strong devotion to party principles, to carry the ticket through. What though the voters do not like the candidates they will surely prefer them to the candidates of the other party who have been nominated by the same methods.

This then is the work of the modern caucus and convention. No candid man will dispute the facts, or claim that the portrayal too strongly presents the defects, or assert that the more debasing practices are even hinted at. And this is the practical result of a century of effort in self-government. In this land of the free, dedicated to the principles of democracy, climbing by the caucus and the convention, the machine has mounted to power in nearly every state of the union.

It controls in making the laws. It controls in executing the laws. It prostitutes the civil service and does not spare even the charitable and penal institutions of the state. It increases the burdens of taxation upon the homes and finds an easy way to allow some corporations to go untaxed.

This is government by the caucus and convention. It is not representative government. It is not government by the people.

Is there no way out? Is there no remedy? Aye, the way is open before us, the remedy is at hand. Let us begin at the bottom. Under our form of government the entire structure rests upon the nomination of candidates for office. This is the founda-

tion of the representative system. If bad men control the nominations we cannot have good government. Let us start right. The life principle of representative government is, that those chosen to govern shall faithfully represent the governed. To insure this the representative must be chosen by those whom he is to represent. This is fundamental. A system built upon any other foundation is not a representative government. By no other means can it be established or maintained. The moment that any power or authority over the representative comes between him and those who have selected him to be their representative that moment he ceases to be their representative. His responsibility is at once transferred to the intervening power or authority. He becomes the trustee of this new authority and to it he must render account for his actions. It is vital then in representative government that no power or authority shall be permitted to come between the representative and those whom he is to represent. To secure this every complication of detail and method, in any system, behind which such intruding power or authority might be concealed must be torn down and cast aside. The voter, and the candidate for nomination who desires to represent the voter, must be brought within reaching distance of each other, must stand face to face.

To accomplish this we must abolish the caucus and convention by law, place the nomination of all candidates in the hands of the people, adopt the Australian ballot and make all nominations by direct vote at a primary election.

Exactly a week after delivering his Ann Arbor address Mr. LaFollette was called upon to bear the loss of his former law partner, Samuel A. Harper, who died March 19, 1898. As LaFollette's most devoted and trusted friend and most effective political promoter, the loss was a sore trial at this teeming and critical time. Mr. Harper was taken suddenly ill with pneumonia, following a chill at his office, one night. Mr. LaFollette hastened to his bedside on returning from Ann Arbor and for several days and nights, without sleep or rest, fought a tense and fruitless fight to save his friend's life. Said the *Baraboo News* at the time: "Bob LaFollette is a friend worth having. During the critical illness of S. A. Harper at Madison lately ex-Congressman LaFollette has been the sick man's most constant

attendant, not having left the Harper home in four days."

Harper was a man of highest ideals in public and private life, of remarkable political astuteness and organizing capacity. He it was who made possible LaFollette's first nomination for congress by bringing to LaFollette's support his (Harper's) native county of Grant, as repeatedly he did afterward in the LaFollette causes. His faith in the future of LaFollette's fortunes never wavered. The doubts of other friends he would invariably meet with the optimistic and prophetic reply, "Just watch LaFollette grow," and frequently in after years LaFollette remembering this would say with misty eyes, "If Sam could only have lived to see this!"

In first seeking the nomination in 1896 LaFollette simply made a short and formal announcement that he would be a candidate and set forth no principles or platform, but in the announcement of his second candidacy July 15, 1898, he issued a vigorous and ringing appeal to the people of the state—an unusual procedure in Wisconsin politics—and presented the issues that pressed for solution. In part he said:

When it is considered that some of the very corporations which wholly escape taxation furnish free transportation to public officials under the guise of an official courtesy, the pass and frank question becomes an issue in Wisconsin politics which will never be settled until the use of passes by public officials is prohibited by law. The people of the state will brook no further trifling on this subject. No quibbling or evasion will serve. No violation or repudiation of platform promises will be tolerated. There must be plain dealing and no complaint can be made if a bond of good faith is demanded with the pledge.

The presence at the state capital of powerful lobbyists for special interests, with their private legislative chambers—the operation of which by a sort of evil contagion extends beyond the scope of their original employment to the defeat of every good measure possible—demands the enactment and enforcement of laws that shall make this method of influencing legislators a pun-

ishable offense in the same manner as improperly approaching judge or jury in a court of justice.

That measures to make untaxed property bear a part of the burden of government, to effectively prohibit corrupt practices in campaigns, and elections, to secure all possible relief from combinations and trusts that destroy competition and restrain trade, to prohibit the acceptance and use of railroad passes, sleeping car passes, express, telephone and telegraph franks by public officials have not found a place on the statute books of our state proves that an all-powerful influence, hostile to the common interest, controls official action. The people have come to know that it controls caucuses, names delegates, nominates candidates, directs legislation and dominates state administrations. The time has come when the people of Wisconsin will no longer submit to minority control through any political machine, when they will demand the abolition of the caucus and convention—by the easy manipulation of which the machine rules—and will claim for themselves the sovereign right to make their own nominations by direct vote at a primary election under an Australian ballot.

A sharp campaign by the Scofield and LaFollette partisans for the election of delegates followed. As in the campaigns of 1894 and 1896 LaFollette opened a big correspondence bureau, to which in this campaign he added pamphleteering, and this feature was not lost to the administration which did likewise.

A. J. Dodge, writing in the *Milwaukee Sentinel* July 30, 1898, said:

In the Fairchild block, Main and Pineknave streets, Mr. LaFollette has his law office. This appears to be the busiest law office in Wisconsin these days. Clients are passing up and down stairs all hours of the day and far into the night. Six or seven rooms are occupied by LaFollette and his lieutenants and assistants. Here and in the office of 'The State' is located the LaFollette "machine."

It is a headquarters, a gigantic literary bureau and a meeting place for the clan of the Madison candidate. Tons of literature and thousands of letters pour out of these rooms and the work which was so effective as to place Mr. LaFollette's name in the lead on the first ballot in the last state convention is done here. A force of stenographers and typewriters and a dozen or fifteen young men and women are engaged in getting out the let-

ters and printed matter which are daily poured through the mails to the people of the state.

Since the LaFollette bureau opened for work in the preliminary campaign there had been sent out of the bureau first a circular letter by Mr. LaFollette announcing his candidacy and inviting attention to the principles he set forth in his formal letter of announcement that has been published. The letter also invites the personal and active support of the person addressed. Accompanying the letter is a printed copy of the announcement made by Mr. LaFollette when he entered the race, sent in the form of an address to the republicans of Wisconsin. The next document issued from the room was a four-page circular, six columns to the page, entitled "Robert M. LaFollette, His Record as a Citizen, Official and Republican." This is made up of extracts from speeches, newspaper comment, sketch of the candidate, etc. Another document issued by the bureau is entitled "Republicans Rally to the Caucuses." It contains the words "Please Post" and is a series of questions relating to platform pledges, passes to public officials, taxation, primary election law, and economy in state administration. The last document is a printed copy of the "Reply of President Pullen of the Milwaukee Republican Club to Senator John C. Spooner."

Governor Scofield and his friends and supporters in the capital also have a literary bureau. This bureau has sent out seven documents as follows: A copy of the "Story of the Sleeping Car and Express Bills;" a copy of an editorial from the *Madison Journal* entitled "Unwarranted Criticism;" an article, "Is Governor Scofield's Administration Extravagant?," prepared by W. J. Scott, superintendent of public property; also a leaflet, "Governor Scofield and the Corporations," and an extract from the governor's Janesville speech; another document on "Governor Scofield and Working Men's Wages;" also a copy of Senator Spooner's article on the gubernatorial contest as printed in the *Sentinel*. Another document reproduces K. K. Kennan's article in the *Sentinel*, "Are License Fees Taxed?," "Was Governor Scofield Justified in Vetoing the Express and Sleeping Car Bills?" These documents are printed and circulated by friends of Governor Scofield in the capitol.

About the same time the *State Journal* commented as follows:

WHERE DOES THE MONEY COME FROM?

More money is being spent in behalf of Mr. LaFollette than was ever expended on behalf of any man seeking a nomination

in the state. Mr. LaFollette has spent a good share of a year and a half in speaking tours. Mr. Hall has devoted months to traveling through the counties holding conferences and making organizations in favor of LaFollette. A newspaper office has been established here, not to publish a newspaper but simply a LaFollette organ. Thirty thousand copies of it are being distributed weekly. An army of typewriters and clerks are employed in writing letters and addressing circulars and newspapers. In Milwaukee 150,000 pamphlets have been printed and sent and letters and circulars are being distributed by the bushel. All this costs a great deal of money. * * *

Alarmed at the aggressive campaign at once set in motion by LaFollette following his announcement, the administration invoked the counteracting aid of Senator Spooner. July 25, ten days after LaFollette's announcement was made, a two column interview with Senator Spooner was printed in the *Milwaukee Sentinel*. Prepared with great care, it was expected to crush the aspirations of LaFollette and at the same time refute the insistent charges of A. R. Hall, though oddly enough Senator Spooner had declared on returning to Wisconsin but a few days before that he knew nothing about conditions in the state, having been in Washington for two years and he therefore deemed it improper for him to express any opinions. Then he went to the other extreme of issuing a long interview.

The interview was mainly a defense of Scofield against the charge of being a corporation governor and in defense of corporation legislation in general in Wisconsin, much of which he had earlier helped to advance while a paid lobbyist at Madison. It contained among other things a long and ingenious lawyer's plea for the failure of his client to urge anti-pass legislation, the claim being made that since the anti-pass plank was adopted by the convention of 1896 apart from the platform it was not part of such platform, but simply an afterthought, as it were, and not binding upon the officials elected upon it.

The *Sentinel* itself criticised the interview as a plea for the corporations that would fail of its purpose. It said: "He has laid too much stress on the governor's war record which is not an issue, and he has made no reference whatever to the only charge which has given Governor Scofield's friends uneasiness."

The Republican club of Milwaukee county, through President Pullen, at once issued a reply to the Spooner letter. Declaring there was no precedent for a United States senator seeking to influence a nomination for governor, Mr. Pullen said:

He is, as he admits, unfamiliar with the situation in our state politics. He has no information to give the people which the supporters of Governor Scofield had not made public before. He adds nothing to the discussion except some flowers of rhetoric and the influence of his position as United States senator. Under these conditions the only purpose that Senator Spooner could have in making the statements published in the *Sentinel* is to use the position which he now occupies—and in which he was placed not less by the supporters of Mr. LaFollette than of Governor Scofield—in the interests of the latter. How desperate the situation to call for such heroic action the making of the statement testified.

Immediately after giving out his interview Senator Spooner left for Nantucket and was absent for the remainder of the season.

Another incident that temporarily caused the administration no little worry and embarrassment was the so-called "doodle-book" exposure, made just a week before the republican state convention was held. The easy practice had grown up in the state treasury of permitting its employes to draw their pay in advance. From the treasury employes it had spread to persons in other departments until the practice had become almost general in the statehouse.

LaFollette men in the treasury soon discovered that the exposure of this practice would be damaging to the administration and gave the story to the newspapers

who featured it in a sensational manner. When the story appeared August 12 both Governor Scofield and State Treasurer S. A. Peterson issued statements that the practice had been "customary," but admitted it was irregular and that it would be stopped. To counteract the advantage given the anti-Scofield forces by this exposure the administration supporters charged LaFollette with receiving financial aid through state money, but he entered vigorous denial and denounced the practice.

Amid regrets from its beneficiaries and speeded by doggerel pleasantries, the "doodle-book," which had been a brief joy of the paragraphers, thus passed out of existence.

CHAPTER IX

The Milwaukee Movement.

IMPORTANT MORAL AND FINANCIAL AID GIVEN REFORM CAUSE—
REPUBLICAN CLUB OF MILWAUKEE COUNTY FORMED—C. F. P.
PULLEN GIVES HISTORY—BAUMGARTNER AND HIS WORK.

IN THE meantime a powerful rebellion against the administration was crystallizing in Milwaukee in the shape of The Republican club of Milwaukee county. Because of the important moral and financial stimulus given the reform cause at this critical time by this organization, a brief notice of the Milwaukee movement may be of value.

As the citadel of the "machine" and the magnetic pole of the big business and big politics of the state, Milwaukee might be expected to furnish the best exemplification of machine politics, which it did. Here were developed those high types of the practical politician seen in Henry C. Payne, E. C. Wall and Dave Rose, who made politics and business synonymous.

The aggressive designs of the street railway company and other corporations as exemplified in these men had led to much complaint and sporadic anti-machine organizations, and the nomination for mayor about this time of such men as W. G. Rauschenberger and Henry J. Baumgartner was a protest against high-handed machine politics.

That such practices were giving concern to thoughtful and conservative men was further shown in the fact that Horace Rublee, editor of the *Milwaukee Sentinel*, soon to close his distinguished editorial career, advised the withdrawal from politics of men of the Henry Payne type.

The republican reform movement, as part of the larger state movement, manifested itself in a small way in Milwaukee as early as 1894. Theodore Zillmer, later sheriff, was one of the first insurgents against the state and local machines, as were A. E. Kuolt and former Senator John J. Kempf. Kempf had been a state senator in the '80s and had been nominated and elected register of deeds in 1892 in the face of strong opposition from the machine. This opposition had made Kempf an insurgent, as it had Kuolt and others. Before the state convention in 1894 was held, Kuolt had been offered \$100 and the best suit of clothes in Milwaukee by a later high state official, now dead, if he would give up his proxy to the convention. This offer simply confirmed Kuolt's opposition to the machine. Accordingly, in the convention, Kuolt regarding Haugen as the anti-machine candidate, voted for him from the first ballot. The Haugen vote from Milwaukee county went steadily up until it reached about 20, Sam Harper of Madison being active in bringing about this result. After this convention Zillmer, Kuolt, Henry J. Baumgartner, Kempf and a few others met and discussed plans of fighting the machine. In 1896, chiefly under Zillmer's leadership, they secured a majority of the county delegation for LaFollette, but many of the delegates were switched away from LaFollette the night before the nominations were made. Proof of bribery was later given the Milwaukee insurgents from various sources, they declared.

In the spring of 1898 the anti-machine republicans so-called had made a hard fight to secure the nomination of Henry J. Baumgartner for mayor, in opposition to the Payne and street railway machine. William Geuder, the republican machine candidate, was nominated, but a Baumgartner, public-ownership platform was adopted with a view to placating the Baumgartner following. Geuder was defeated by Dave Rose, democrat, the street railway candidate, then elected for the first time.

Immediately following his defeat for the nomination and that of the republican ticket in the election, friends of Baumgartner resolved to organize for the defeat of the "machine" in the future. Then it occurred to the minds of some of the insurgent republicans to broaden the scheme of organization by taking a stand for certain large reforms of state interest and making an appeal to the voters upon them. Out of this grew the club which may be said to have germinated in the law office of Kronshage, Tarrant, McGovern & Dielmann.

The idea of some sort of club had been discussed at various preliminary meetings, Judge Eugene S. Elliott being among others who favored it. One evening F. E. McGovern, later governor, was designated to represent his law firm at a meeting to discuss a scheme of organization. Nothing came of this meeting owing to a division on the question of a closed or open organization, so to speak, Mr. McGovern opposing anything which resembled Tammanyism and standing out for an organization of such a broad character that it could confidently go before the people. "It's the only way we can win," he said; "the republicans never got anything here by gumshoe methods."

At the suggestion of Dr. John J. McGovern and others, a meeting was called at the law office of Kronshage, Tarrant, McGovern & Dielmann, Wednesday evening, April 20, 1898, and the nucleus of the club was formed. Seven men were present at this first meeting, according to the records which have come down, they being Dr. J. J. McGovern, A. E. Kuolt, C. H. Trumpf, H. J. Baumgartner, A. F. Zentner, Theodore Zillmer and John J. Kempf. It is probable that there were at least two others present, F. E. McGovern, who, according to the memory of some, brought the keys and opened the office, and W. D. Tarrant, who, according to Dr. McGovern's recollection, presided informally at the meeting, Kron-

shage being in the east at that time trying a case. Theodore Zillmer acted as secretary.

The next meeting was held in the same office April 29, John J. Kempf acting as president and Mr. Zillmer as secretary. To this meeting came an additional score of insurgents, C. M. Paine, W. D. Tarrant, George Seybold, F. F. Hyde, Thomas W. Sheriffs, F. C. Lorenz, E. W. Choinski, C. A. Menges, J. W. S. Tomkiewicz, David Harlowe, W. E. Van Altena, Charles Elkert, John Hannan, James Marlett, Charles Dielmann, L. J. Kreutzberg, James L. Norman, John C. Vogenitz, A. J. Stoessel, C. C. Maas, D. F. Sherman, M. D. Kelly, J. E. Corrigan and Fred Winkel.

Steps toward permanent organization were decided upon at this meeting, and Chairman Kempf appointed the following committees: On principles and resolutions, Messrs. Paine, Baumgartner, Sheriffs, Lorenz and Trumpf; on permanent organization and by-laws, Messrs. Lorenz, Kuolt, Stoessel, Harlowe and Corrigan. It was voted to invite to the next meeting representatives from all wards of the city who might be interested in the movement.

At the next meeting, May 6, which was the first meeting of the club as such, the following were also present and added to the membership: F. E. McGovern, Charles Van Ewyk, W. G. Rausehenberger, C. F. P. Pullen, H. O. Reinholdt, A. Markert, G. W. Petermann, Richard Schmidt, W. T. Duke, Joseph Vallier, George Reinholdt, George Brew, E. D. Carter, M. N. Lando, H. A. Martin and August Sonnemann.

Fifty-five men signed the roll of the club that evening. The name of "The Republican Club of Milwaukee County" was decided upon for the organization and it was voted that the club should consist of three members from each ward, town, village and city of the fourth class in Milwaukee county. Each ward, village, town

and city was also to form an auxiliary club, with similar officers to the main club and a committee to consist of the officers and three other members. Also each auxiliary was to elect three members to represent the auxiliary in the main club.

Previous to this meeting Messrs. Baumgartner, Zillmer and Zentner had visited R. M. LaFollette in Madison and obtained a set of principles which were reported at this meeting and adopted by the club. They were brief and read as follows:

As members of the republican party we cherish the glory of its illustrious past and proclaim an abiding faith in its greater future. With affection and reverence for its leaders, living and dead, we here declare our devotion to its enduring principles.

We view with increasing alarm the encroachments of the political machine in its control of the great political parties of this state. It has steadily increased its power until it threatens to subvert the principles of representative government in the choice of candidates for office, in state and federal appointments, and in the enactment and administration of the laws of the state. And we here declare our unalterable opposition to the political machine and its methods.

We here pledge ourselves to use all honorable means to secure the nomination of candidates for office known to be loyal and steadfast to the following principles:

1. Equal and just taxation of all the property of each individual and of every corporation transacting business within the state.

2. The abolition of the caucus and convention and the nomination of candidates by Australian ballot at a primary election.

3. The prohibition of the acceptance of railroad passes, sleeping car passes, express, telegraph and telephone franks by public officials.

4. The enactment and enforcement of laws prohibiting trusts and combinations that destroy competition and restrain trade.

Officers were elected as follows: President, C. F. P. Pullen; vice president, Francis E. McGovern; secretary, Albert E. Kuolt; treasurer, Charles H. Trumpf. It was voted to hold the next meeting in Room 13, the Metropolitan block, same building.

Caucus 6th Ward

Friday, Aug. 12th, 1898

If you favor the nomination of

Robert M. La Follette,

FOR GOVERNOR,

Vote for the following 7 delegates to the

STATE CONVENTION

FRED. W. CORDS X

JAKE HART X

• OTTO SEIDEL, Jr. X

HUGO ZEDLER X

CHAS. VAN EWEYK X

J. L. NEDDERSON X

H. A. SCHWARTZBURG X

BOOTHS open at 12 NOON and close at 8 P. M.
Voters living west of Third Street vote at
Booth on Sherman Street, near 5th. Voters
living east of Third Street vote at Booth
on Lloyd Street near Island Avenue.

On May 16 the club added the following new members: Otto Seidel, Charles P. Hart, Otto L. Hahn, F. T. Souther, William Gerbardt, Emil Umfried, A. G. R. Tews, L. B. Stiles, Ira Lundy, M. J. Brew, George Stelloh, while among others added later were Zeno M. Host, William A. Arnold, Christ. Doerfler, William Bahr, W. J. McElroy, Theodore Puls and Adolph Kurtz. Robert M. LaFollette had that day announced his candidacy for the governorship and the announcement created the liveliest interest among the club members at the meeting. At this meeting also it was voted to print 50,000 copies of the principles of the club in English and German, and 10,000 copies in English and Polish, for distribution.

The auxiliary ward organizations grew rapidly, and at the weekly meeting, May 23, the following ward committees were announced:

First ward—C. M. Paine, W. D. Tarrant.

Second ward—Ferd. Paringer, George Seybold, Charles Fiebrants.

Third ward—John Hannan, James Marlett, George A. Foster.

Fourth ward—John J. McGovern, Charles Dielmann, T. F. Hyde.

Fifth ward—T. W. Sheriffs, A. Salisbury, John Joys.

Sixth ward—C. P. Hart, Charles Van Ewyk, G. W. Petermann.

Seventh ward—

Eighth ward—F. C. Lorenz, Christian Doerfler, L. J. Kreutzberg.

Ninth ward—Richard Schmidt, P. J. Bril, A. A. Wieber.

Tenth ward—H. J. Baumgartner, A. F. Zentner, Theodore Zillmer.

Eleventh ward—J. C. Vogenitz, J. L. Norman, E. W. Choinski.

Twelfth ward—William Bahr, William T. Duke, G. D. Bosse.

Thirteenth ward—Charles Menges, A. J. Stoessel, John J. Kempf.

Fourteenth ward—J. W. S. Tomkiewicz, Chas. Esau, J. Rajski.

Fifteenth ward—D. Sherman, George Thuring.

Sixteenth ward—David Harlowe, M. D. Kelly.

Seventeenth ward—Joseph Vallier, William Stevenson, T. P. Dilyer.

Eighteenth ward—W. E. Van Altena, M. N. Lando.

Nineteenth ward—Otto L. Hahn, H. O. Reinholdt, George Reinholdt.

Twentieth ward—Charles Elkert, F. Wenkel, August Sonnemann.

Twenty-first ward—F. C. Rader, A. Markert, John Roth.

North Greenfield—George Brew, Jacob Conrad, Jr., George Stelloh.

Whitefish Bay—H. K. Curtis, James McGec.

Wauwatosa—H. E. Bradley, F. T. Souther.

Granville—Washington Boorse.

Franklin—B. Bader, F. Schmidt, F. Brinn.

Lake—Henry Strothenke, L. Stiles.

Wauwatosa City—Louis Rogers, Henry Traever.

Having outgrown its quarters the club accepted an invitation to hold its future meetings in the club room of the Plaukinton hotel, and here the next meeting was held May 31.

Regular weekly meetings were held by the club and the work of organization was rapidly extended. A committee on campaign literature, with Francis E. McGovern as chairman, was appointed and another on finance, headed by John J. Kempf.

Under the energetic and effective lead of such men as Baumgartner, Zillmer, Kuolt, Dr. McGovern, Kronshage

and President Pullen, a remarkably effective ward organization was rapidly built up and the necessary funds raised with celerity as needed. The rapid growth of the club soon caused apprehension in the regular republican county committee which sent a delegation to the Plankinton headquarters to inquire into the purposes of the new organization and to urge moderation in the interests of party harmony. A. E. Kuolt, for one, was a member of both the regular county committee and the anti-machine organization and was particularly subjected to pressure by the regulars. Kuolt, Kronshage and Kempf had been very active in the spring campaign seeking to bring about the nomination of Baumgartner for mayor, one result of which was that the *Evening Wisconsin* read the "three K's" out of the party.

While not formally endorsing the gubernatorial candidacy of LaFollette until some time after the candidacy was announced, the free-masonry of the club was decidedly pro-LaFollette. In fact, had not LaFollette come out as a candidate for governor, the activities of the club would probably soon have ceased. "We came to a point," said F. E. McGovern, "when it became necessary to go either forward or backward. We urged LaFollette to become a candidate and told him that if he did not, we would quit; that ours was no debating society. After a nearly all-night session with some of us, he agreed to be a candidate and true to our word we then went enthusiastically into the fight and gave him splendid support."

In fact the devotion of the organization to the LaFollette cause was almost of the fanatical kind. So strict was the unwritten code of loyalty to the cause that if a member went over to the opposition through money or favors, he was ostracised both socially and in business matters.

However, the club thought it advisable to declare that

its purpose was the advancement of certain political principles and ideas, rather than the political fortunes of individuals. In a speech before the club, June 22, President Pullen said among other things:

Since the charge has been made that we have organized for the purpose of promoting the political advancement of certain individuals, I here absolutely deny such to be the case. The test of membership in this club is not allegiance to the political fortunes of anyone. Its fight will be for principles, not for men, and though it will support for nomination such men, and such men only, as are in sincere accord with its principles, it will not act as a machine for any party candidate.

The club is born of the necessity of meeting the organized power of the machine by an organization equally as potent. When the plan upon which it was devised is consummated, as it soon will be, it will be representative of the auxiliary clubs located in each ward and town of this county and, we trust, of the state. Each auxiliary club will elect three representatives who will take the places of the gentlemen now representing the various wards and towns and who will carry forward the movement thus begun.

One of the notable things done by the club was the issuing of the pamphlet entitled "Governor Scofield's Record as Shown by His Official Acts." This was read by Chairman F. E. McGovern of the committee on literature at the meeting July 18, and on motion of Theodore Kronshage was endorsed by the club and ordered printed, President Pullen assuming responsibility for it by affixing his name to it. This was a twenty-four page pamphlet, perhaps the most seathing review of a public official that had so far seen the light in Wisconsin, and was perhaps the most effective single influence in the campaign in creating a prejudice against Governor Scofield. This was a composite production in which politicians professed to see the hand of Gilbert E. Roe of Madison, A. R. Hall, and others.

Besides the charges of general subserviency to the special interests, the pamphlet contained one feature that provoked general interest. This was a repetition of A. R. Hall's attack upon the governor for having shipped

his cow upon an express frank from Oconto to Madison. Her story thus blazoned far and wide, the Scofield cow attained a temporary immortality little anticipated by her owner when he decided to transfer her from the calm retreat of Oconto to the aristocratic atmosphere of the capital.

July 27, 1898, at a meeting at the Plankinton attended by about fifty members, the club formally endorsed the candidacy of LaFollette by the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas, the Republican Club of Milwaukee County was organized to further certain principles by it adopted, and to use all honorable means to secure the nomination of candidates for office known to be loyal and steadfast to these principles, therefore, be it resolved, that this club endorse the candidacy of the Hon. Robert M. LaFollette for governor as best representing the objects and principles of this club.

As indicating the active part the club had already taken in the campaign, Theodore Kronshage, chairman of the committee on organization, reported that clubs had been formed in all wards but nine, while F. E. McGovern, chairman of the committee on literature, reported the distribution to date of 75,000 copies of the pamphlet reviewing Governor Scofield's record and 13,000 copies of President Pullen's speech.

It will thus be seen that the club had quickly developed into a factor of the largest importance. The effectiveness of its organization was seen in the fact that in the primaries held August 12, the club won for LaFollette half of the delegation, 144 members, to the republican state convention.

The last meeting of the club that year was held August 31, when it was voted to invite Mr. LaFollette to come to Milwaukee and make a speech under its auspices.

Interesting as showing some of the natural elements out of which the LaFollette movement grew, is the case of President Pullen of the Milwaukee club, as Pullen's

first inspiration was the impulse to aid an old friend. Pullen had known LaFollette from boyhood. His father had come to the little village of Argyle, Lafayette county, Wisconsin, from Maine, about 1850, and started a store. Next door was another store kept by an old man named John Z. Saxton. One day in the '60s Saxton brought home a bride with several children. She was Mrs. Mary LaFollette of Primrose before her marriage to Saxton. Not long afterward while Pullen was playing with Perry C. Wilder, later to be prominent in political life, and a number of other boys, a bright little chap came up and said, "My name is Bob LaFollette; what is yours?" It was the beginning of a lifelong friendship of this trio.

Said Mr. Pullen on this point:

Bob was no different from the rest, no brighter in school, no better; perhaps more mischievous. We grew up together, played together, tried to learn to smoke and chew, became awfully sick, and did other things usual with boys.

I remember that during the latter days of the civil war we formed a boys' fife and drum corps with little Bobbie as a fifer. We had a picture taken which I have since lost. One morning on the way to Sunday school we went down to the Pecatonica river. There was a great flood with the river nearly a mile wide. Prying a great cake of ice loose, Bob, Perry Wilder, and I, with some other boys, got on it and were carried several miles down the river, at very great peril, before we could land. We missed Sunday school, but my folks didn't know of it for years.

Bob soon went back to the Primrose farm home. Then father moved to Evansville, Green county, followed by the Wilder, Andrews and other families and Bob came back with us for a term in the seminary at Evansville.

We had no hand in the Haugen campaign in 1894 as an organization and had not yet begun to formulate any definite ideas on the contest that was shaping in Wisconsin. I remember I attended the republican state convention at the Academy of Music in 1896 and saw them sit down on A. R. Hall and his anti-pass resolution. I was using a good many passes myself then and rather disliked the possibility of losing them. So I felt more comfortable when they refused to put Hall's resolution in the platform, but I didn't like the rough way in which he was treated, and it set me to thinking, and I soon became an anti-pass advo-

cate myself. I felt, too, that the brusque way Keyes and the other fellows had of running things was not quite right, although my father, while a member of the legislature, had voted for Keyes for United States senator.

We were beaten in 1896, though by all figuring before and since I believe we were entitled to the nomination.

It was in 1898, when LaFollette became a candidate for the second time, that we first organized in Milwaukee. Our families had all met at Evansville that spring for a reunion and Bob had suggested that I see what I could do for him in Milwaukee. LaFollette had always counseled with me in matters political; when he ran for district attorney and again when running for congress, and when he issued his reply to Sawyer in 1891. I remember we told him when he aspired to congress in 1884 that he could hardly hope to beat the Keyes crowd, but since he had nothing to lose and everything to gain, to go in. Also when he came to Milwaukee with his expose of Sawyer, we said we were fearful of the consequences and that he couldn't hope to make the public take his word against that of so big a man as Sawyer, but he went ahead anyway.

Well, on returning from Evansville I talked with Theodore Kronshage, Francis E. McGovern and W. D. Tarrant, then all young lawyers recently out of the university, Dr. J. J. McGovern, and others and we decided to call a meeting.

Our first meetings were held at the law offices of Kronshage, Tarrant, McGovern & Dielmau, in the Metropolitan block, Third and State streets, but the room proving rather small we soon met in the club room of the Plankinton hotel, which had been offered us. We adopted the name "The Republican Club of Milwaukee County." I was elected president, Francis E. McGovern, vice president, and Albert E. Kuolt, then an active young bank clerk, secretary. Kronshage also was backed for president, but because of my lifelong friendship with LaFollette, I was regarded as the logical man for the place. I remember I wrote out and made an insurgent speech, the first of its kind of which I know. We met once a week and the club grew very fast. We appointed committees in nearly every precinct and began organizing the field for LaFollette. We didn't talk LaFolletteism at first, but rather anti-machine republicanism, having gotten our ideas from LaFollette. In fact we didn't dare to admit that the organization was for the support of LaFollette. I was scared myself, because I was a banker and was told that I would lose my head and my business if I persisted in my activity. "How?" I asked. "Well, the railroads will fix you," was the reply. In fact, we received

notices of that kind all along. E. I. Kidd, later bank examiner, received similar warnings for his activity. One of the means taken to impress us was to make the railroad men draw their funds out of certain banks. But the real purpose of our organization couldn't long be kept down and as we got stronger we became bolder.

Soon, we had a delegation from the regular republican county committee of Milwaukee call on us. One of the delegation, Alec Hill, wanted to know what we were "doing with all that organizing;" it was causing much excitement in their camp. We told him that we were republicans, but believed in certain progressive principles, and succeeded in sending the delegation back somewhat reassured, but they warned us against getting off the reservation.

Then we got out the anti-Seofield pamphlet. I took the responsibility for this publication and signed my name to it for the club. This was printed in English, German, Polish and other languages and thousands of copies were sent out. It caused quite a sensation and brought much criticism upon me. My old friend, Joe Treat, and Charles Pfister and others of the party managers, called on me and asked me to retract and said we were making trouble for the party, but I replied that the democrats would make such charges anyway, and we might as well face them and correct them ourselves.

Then came the two-column letter in the *Sentinel* from Senator Spooner, urging the renomination of Governor Seofield. The same day Gil Roe telephoned me from Madison, "something must be done" to reply to it. I told him to come right in to Milwaukee and we would reply. We stayed up all night in Kronshage's office drawing up a reply which I signed and took to the *Sentinel* office. While we were talking with Editor Myrick about it, an old man sitting near asked, "What's that you're talking about?" I didn't know him but let him see the paper. He was Captain Bean, one of the directors of the *Sentinel* company, and after reading it he told Myrick to print it.

Such were some of the incidents of our early activities.

Dr. John J. McGovern said of his part in the movement:

As I remember it, I called the first meeting in Milwaukee which was the beginning of the new republican movement there. I came to Milwaukee in 1893. Soon afterward I attended a republican preliminary held in Campbell's hall in the third ward, to elect delegates to various conventions. Of the twenty or thirty

men proposed for delegates I didn't know more than three or four. That fact, together with the manner in which the meeting was run by certain men, set me thinking and I decided that thereafter I would not vote for men I did not know as was the practice in caucuses. I would know the men.

There were others who didn't like the way things were being run politically and one of these was Henry J. Baumgartner, who was such a fearless fighter in the city council and once the republican candidate for mayor. Baumgartner should be given the highest credit in the inspiration and launching of the reform movement in Milwaukee. He was a power among the workingmen on the north side, a fearless fighter of graft in the council, always true blue and absolutely incorruptible. Many of us have felt that he was counted out of the mayoralty. If he was honestly defeated it was not that the integrity and courage of the man were questioned, but because many who would liked to have supported him felt that he was too radical and outspoken and might carry things too far if given power. He was ahead of his time; the civic conscience and courage of Milwaukee had not yet been sufficiently aroused. More education was needed.

Through the inspiration of Sam Harper we had been active for LaFollette in 1896, in a rather unorganized way. Harper was then the president of the League of Republican Clubs of the state and when the party machine leaders attempted to throw him out and elect M. G. Jeffris as president, we helped retain him in his place. To show how we had already become identified with the new movement I may say that when Harper died in March, 1898, Baumgartner, W. G. Rauschenberger, Pullen, Zentner, Zillmer, John Corrigan and myself, besides others, went to Madison to his funeral.

In the spring before LaFollette's second campaign for the governorship a number of us who were opposed to the way things were being run first met in the law office of Kronshage, Tarrant, McGovern & Dielmann, at my suggestion. While not entirely certain on that point, I believe that among those present were Henry J. Baumgartner, John J. Kempf, Theodore Zillmer, Theodore Kronshage, W. D. Tarrant, A. E. Kuolt, August Zentner, myself and my younger brother, Francis E. McGovern. I think Tarrant presided at the meeting.

When LaFollette came out as a candidate, our efforts crystallized into something concrete under his leadership. We became a part of the LaFollette movement. Baumgartner, Zillmer and

Zentner went to Madison and got a set of principles from LaFollette which became the creed and propaganda of our organization.

It may here be said that in 1900 the friends of Baumgartner succeeded in having him nominated, against Wade H. Richardson, but Baumgartner also was to be defeated by Rose, who was now supported by the machine men of both parties. Baumgartner is believed to have lost many votes by taking the stump and urging his then radical program in his fiery manner. His friends begged him not to go out, and as one of them afterward said, "prayed that he might break a leg or otherwise be incapacitated," but to no avail. His oratory was of the fervent kind. He would leap into the air while speaking and if there were no table to pound he would get down and pound the floor.

In the Baumgartner campaign the club placed LaFollette's picture over the ward tickets, thus tying up the Baumgartner with the LaFollette cause.

Of the club it remains to be said that it was reorganized June 11, 1900, and was more or less active in that campaign and in that of 1902.

It is possible that an even greater service was rendered the reform cause by this club in 1904 than in the earlier campaigns. It was very close to the time of the republican caucuses and the club, as an organization, had as yet done nothing when it occurred to Francis E. McGovern, then seeking the nomination for district attorney, that something should be done to secure delegates for LaFollette. A meeting was called at once and the club reorganized with E. L. Traey as president and Henry F. Coehems as secretary. A sharp campaign was prosecuted and because of previous organization, an effective one, as LaFollette won a third or more of the delegates from the county. Without this support from Milwaukee and its moral effect, his political fortunes in

the state convention might have met a much more crucial test than they experienced.

In the matter of sending progressive representatives from its city to the legislature, however, the club appears to have been less interested or at least less successful. The generality of legislators from Milwaukee during the so-called LaFollette regime was reactionary and hostile to the reform movement. Indeed it came to be accepted as a truism in the LaFollette camp that "nothing good can come out of Milwaukee."

Yet bearing in mind the official atmosphere which pervaded the Milwaukee city hall during this period; remembering the unmoral makeup of the official mind as revealed later in the McGovern graft prosecutions, and the further fact that the first McGovern grand jury reported in effect that it was "too rotten" to act, and asked to be discharged, there will be less wonder at the legislative product of the time.



Scene on LaFollette Farm, Madison, Wis.

CHAPTER X

Convention of 1898.

LaFOLLETTE A THREE-WEEK CANDIDATE—RUMORS OF "DARK-HORSE" TO BE ENTERED—STIRRING CONVENTION SCENES—SCOFIELD RENOMINATED—PROGRESSIVE ADVANCE IN PLATFORM.

GOVERNOR SCOFIELD owed his renomination that year, first, to the fact that the machine managers decided not to disturb him and, next, to the second term precedent and political habit of thought of the people, the conservative disposition to give a man a second trial even if found wanting in the first. Remembering the ease with which they had eliminated Upham two years before, there was a disposition among some of the organization leaders to also sidetrack Scofield and again present a new man with no record to handicap him such as Upham had acquired and which Scofield had duplicated. Congressman Babcock favored H. C. Adams of Madison, later congressman, on the ground that Adams would also have strength with the insurgent element. However, the more astute managers felt that it was too critical a time to court any possible demoralization in their ranks on which LaFollette might seize to advantage. Besides Scofield himself might make trouble if a change were attempted. A politician and former legislator himself and of different mettle from Upham, he might not be so easily shooed off after one term. It was decided it would be unwise to attempt swapping horses while crossing the political stream ahead and Scofield was endorsed for renomination.

But the machine was yielding. It was willing to adopt anti-corporation platforms if it could name its men to enforce the laws. This vaudeville performance had been given trial in Milwaukee that spring when a corporation

candidate for mayor was nominated on an anti-corporation platform and had resulted in the defeat of the candidate by 8,700 votes, although Milwaukee was normally republican. It was nevertheless now proposed to re-nominate Scofield on a LaFollette platform.

LaFollette did not formally announce his candidacy until July 15. This left practically but three weeks for the securing of delegates before the state convention, but so fast and furious a campaign did LaFollette wage that the administration organs expressed the utmost concern. Although none of them were delegates, the big stalwart field marshals, Sawyer, Payne, Pfister, Keyes and others, were again early on hand at the convention to manipulate and hold their forces in line. Persistently the possibility was suggested of a third candidate being brought out to defeat both the warring principals. Up to the very day of the convention this mighty and sinister figure, whose identity none could guess, was conjured up, but he failed to materialize. Hope of trading possibilities in case of emergency was doubtless the main consideration of the stalwarts in grooming this man of straw. However, when the convention opened at Milwaukee August 17 there was no little apprehension in the minds of the Scofield supporters. While the regulars won the day the convention was to prove little better than a Pyrrhic victory. It was one of the most fiercely contested nominations in the history of the state and was replete with striking incidents as yet unrecorded.

Almost at the opening they were forced to yield ground and make a practical concession of error. As if to absolve the candidates from any platform promises the supporters of Scofield sought to rush through the nominations of candidates before adopting a platform. The LaFollette men jumped to their feet in objection.

"Before I vote for a candidate for governor," said

Gen. George E. Bryant, "I want to know what platform he stands on. Two years ago we had an anti-pass resolution adopted by the convention and the governor who had been nominated before that resolution was passed refused to recognize it."

Finally the Scofield forces yielded and an adjournment was taken until evening.

Largely through the efforts of Gilbert E. Roe, LaFollette's former law partner, who fought persistently in the committee on resolutions for a progressive platform, an advanced set of principles, largely formulated by LaFollette, Hall and Davidson, was reported to the convention. Ever since 1886 the party platforms had been silent on state issues, contenting themselves with endorsements of national platforms and the waving of the bloody shirt. The platform of 1898 was therefore notable. Among other things it pronounced against the pass evil, the lobby, the "doodle book" and the Bennett law bogie, and favored more equal taxation (railroad taxation). Also there was a squinting toward primary election endorsement in the following equivocal pronouncement—the nearest approach to a primary plank that Mr. Roe could secure:

Recognizing that the present caucus and convention law is not free from defects, we favor such legislation as will secure to every citizen the freest expression of his choice in the selection of candidates.

A minority platform report which omitted any specific endorsement of Governor Scofield was presented by Mr. Roe and the first test vote of the convention came on the question of its adoption. The majority report was adopted by a vote of 643½ to 416½. The nominations were not made until after midnight following a stormy evening session in which charges of money and trading flew back and forth. The LaFollette forces fought with a courage and enthusiasm that called forth wonder on all sides. The Madison man was placed in

nomination in a spirited oratorical effort by A. H. Long, warmly seconded by Henry F. Coehems and others, while A. R. Hall made a fiery attack on Seofield, declaring the governor had pledged himself to anti-pass legislation, but had secretly worked against it. He also scored Seofield for congratulating the people on their pleasant relations with the railroads, and pointed to specific instances of discrimination and tax-dodging on the part of the roads.

Ira B. Bradford presented the name of Seofield, the final vote standing: Seofield, 620½; LaFollette, 436½; C. E. Estabrook, 6; Emil Baensch, 2.

Seofield was thus renominated, but on practically a LaFollette platform. As a sign of further concessions the Seofield forces also gave the nomination for state treasurer to a LaFollette adherent, Assemblyman James O. Davidson, later governor, but, it is said, that in order that he might not forget to whom he owed the favor it was arranged to give him the nomination by a margin of but one-half vote.

If this is true it illustrates how trifles determine destiny. This nomination so narrowly won no doubt led to Davidson's eventual elevation to the governor's chair. Davidson, by the way, had previously won a somewhat similarly narrow victory when he was seated in an assembly contest in a democratic house by a margin of one vote. One of his friends remarked that "as a close shave for fame Madame Roland's snatching of immortality at the last moment on the gallows by her exclamation, 'Ah, Liberty! how many crimes are committed in thy name!' thus had a sort of parallel in this instance. So nigh is grandeur to our dust."

LaFollette had failed of the nomination again, but had made such important gains that it was a moral victory. So strong had become the sentiment in favor of primary elections and equal taxation that planks en-

dorsing these principles were incorporated in the democratic platform that year. The republican ticket was, however, elected.

LaFollette took no part in the campaign following the convention. The strain of the pre-convention fight proved too great and while trying a law case in Baraboo in October he was taken very ill. He had agreed on many dates and had planned to open in his native town of Primrose. So ill was he that for a time much anxiety was felt by his family and friends. On November 26, after he had been in bed five weeks, a newspaper dispatch stated that he was unable to take any nourishment, being unable to keep even malted milk on his stomach. For a time there were fears for his life, but eventually he became himself again. Nevertheless he did not escape the charge that he was simply sulking in his tent.

The democrats adopted a strongly progressive platform with this unequivocal declaration on primary elections:

We are in favor of a primary election law to replace the present method of nominating candidates for office and that all nominations shall be made by a direct vote of the people.

Judge H. W. Sawyer of Hartford was nominated for governor. Nevertheless Scofield was re-elected. LaFollette having been twice defeated for the nomination for governor, it was assumed by the opposition, and by many of his friends as well, that he would not again be a candidate in 1900. Many men quit at one defeat; many more at two.

More responsive to the public demand too and in hope of laying somewhat the dangerous LaFollette agitation, the legislature of that year, which was also regular, redeemed in part the platform pledges made. Although the railroads announced immediately after the election that they had voted to continue the giving of passes

to legislators as usual, in spite of anti-pass planks in the platform of both the republican and democratic parties, the legislature of 1899 finally passed an anti-pass law when the session was about over, and after many members had used passes industriously all winter. Thus after eight long years of fighting A. R. Hall was to see one of his cherished reforms established. Also the legislature enacted the Whitehead bills for the taxation of sleeping car, express, freight line and equipment companies similar to the Davidson bills vetoed in 1897 and made permanent the tax commission created in 1897. But it killed the primary election bill introduced by Gen. George E. Bryant, then the Madison member of the assembly, and also the bills by A. R. Hall for the taxation and regulation of railroads and the creation of a railroad commission, which bills Hall had likewise pressed in the legislature of 1895, only to see them go down in defeat.

Thus the issues of primary elections and railway taxation and regulation remained unsettled and gave promise of looming big on the horizon of the next campaign.

CHAPTER XI

LaFollette's First Nomination and Election.

MANY CANDIDATES IN FIELD—IMPORTANT DUAL VICTORY OF LAFOLLETTE FORESHADOWS HIS NOMINATION—OPPOSING CANDIDATES RAPIDLY WITHDRAW—SPOONER ANNOUNCES DETERMINATION TO QUIT SENATE—UNANIMOUS NOMINATION OF LAFOLLETTE—REMARKABLE SPEAKING TOUR AND GREAT ENTHUSIASM FOR CANDIDATE.

A FREE field presenting itself in 1900, five republican candidates were early in the race for the nomination for governor. They were Senator John M. Whitehead of Janesville, Senator A. M. Jones of Waukesha, Senator De Wayne Stebbins of Algoma, General Earl M. Rogers of Viroqua and Ira B. Bradford of Augusta.

No one of these five, however, was a strong candidate and no one represented to a satisfactory degree the new movement in the party. All made their bids for support on a plea for "harmony."

After his two defeats for the nomination it was assumed by many that LaFollette would not again be a candidate in 1900, and for some weeks after the others were in the field he was scarcely mentioned in the press as a possibility. Gradually, however, a demand that he be a candidate sprang up in different parts of the state. Newspapers pointed out that his fight with Scofield two years before had resulted in much good legislation. It was better than a namby-pamby policy of "harmony" they declared, and LaFollette should come forth as a candidate again. On the other hand many papers frowned on such suggestion. The *Wausau Record*, for instance, said there was "no room in the state for a personal party."

At last in response to the call going up to him from

all parts of the state he decided to enter the field and announced his candidacy in the *Milwaukee Sentinel* May 16. It is interesting to note that on the day when he went to Milwaukee with this announcement there was met before the tax commission at Madison a great array of attorneys of all the railroads in Wisconsin, who argued that so far from paying less than their share of taxes the railroads were paying more than other property and in Wisconsin proportionately more than in other states.

While LaFollette's announcement set forth the need of continued progress in legislation it did so in very general terms and the announcement was quite conciliatory as compared to his call to arms in 1898. He referred to the better feeling within the party and said he would do all he could consistent with principle to promote and maintain this feeling.

Mr. LaFollette's entrance in the field immediately set the press of the state agog with discussion. Yet, strange to say, the majority of the newspapers at first doubted his ability to secure the nomination. Even Judge Keyes while on a visit to LaCrosse in June doubted LaFollette's ability to carry his home county. Yet the very general discussion which he precipitated soon showed that he could not be considered merely a local candidate like the others. Activity in his behalf began manifesting itself in all parts of the state. Traveling men reported that small country merchants were everywhere "talking LaFollette."

Soon after his announcement the opposition raised the question as to whether or not LaFollette was hostile to Senator John C. Spooner, and if he would use the governorship, in case of his election, as a stepping stone or lever to displace Spooner. It would be natural to expect that LaFollette would not be kindly disposed toward Spooner in view of the latter's attack on the candi-

daey of LaFollette in 1898. So general became a rumor to this effect in the anti-LaFollette press that to settle it LaFollette gave out an interview May 30 that he would do nothing to prevent the re-election of Spooner, that he would be neutral in the matter of the senatorship and his sole purpose would be to so conduit the affairs of the state as to entitle him to re-election as governor. He even gave credit to Governor Seofield and the legislature for what had been accomplished during the legislative session just elosed. In an interview in the *Milwaukee Sentinel*, May 31, LaFollette said: "In this connection it may be as well to say something with referenee to my candidaey of two years ago. My reasons for being a candidate at that time were justified and emphasized by the convention in its platform. It has been largely the faithful observanee of the pledges then given which entitles Governor Seofield's administration, at this time, to public approval, in which I heartily join."

In May, 1902, the *Milwaukee Sentinel* printed a series of letters that had passed two years before between H. G. Kress of Manitowoe and Henry C. Payne to show that Mr. LaFollette had been willing in 1900 to treat with the "machine." The first letter written by Mr. Kress to Mr. Payne was dated May 3, 1900, nearly two weeks before LaFollette announeed his candidaey. After referring to the fight that had been made by LaFollette men on Payne's re-election to the national committee at the state convention recently held in Milwaukee for the election of delegates to the national convention, the letter continued:

Why can't we get together? Do you object if the contesting against you is stopped? Confidentially, Mr. Payne, I believe the time is ripe to unite forces. Why not let LaFollette have his chance if he is willing to stop fighting on his side? I will say that I was authorized by certain LaFollette leaders to see you the evening before the convention, but I found you were out of the city. They knew I was your friend and was also friendly to Bob. These young fellows are a growing strength and will increase in

power yearly. We can have them with us by a little diplomacy at this time."

Mr. Payne replied by letter May 5 that he deplored the factionalism within the party and would be willing to meet Mr. Kress for further consultation. Accordingly on May 11 Kress and Jerre C. Murphy called on Mr. Payne, who suggested that written propositions be submitted. Later such propositions were presented as follows:

1. That there is no opposition so far as LaFollette is concerned to you as chairman or as a member of the national committee.
2. That neither you nor Mr. Pfister would work against Mr. LaFollette for governor if he decided to be a candidate.
3. Both sides to keep hands off the next senatorial fight—that is, in this campaign.
4. That interests be mutualized as time advances.

The propositions were finally rejected by Payne, who declared that as a friend of Senator Spooner he could not subscribe to them, and nothing definite and tangible came of the efforts of Mr. Kress.

However, it is possible that the very fact that such negotiations were attempted may have tended to soften the feelings between the two factions. It established a sort of truce, as it were. In the meantime, LaFollette had made his friendly announcement as a candidate and followed it May 30 with an interview of like tenor, while Payne was so engrossed with the national convention then approaching as to find little time for state politics. Also in the meantime the LaFollette hustlers throughout the state were industriously carrying county after county for him by methods more friendly than they had pursued in the past. It may therefore be within bounds to say that the Kress negotiations were not wholly devoid of results.

When LaFollette read his message in 1901, making firm demand for the reforms in taxation he had so long championed, a cry went up from the railroads and other

corporations that he was "not playing fair;" that he had agreed in the campaign to treat the railroads and other corporations justly and that with that understanding they had not opposed him, and consequently he had been accorded a unanimous nomination and no opposition at the polls. It was said that a truce and pact had been brought about through Congressman Babcock and Henry Casson. It is true that in the winter and early spring of 1900 LaFollette and Babcock held a long distance flirtation between Madison and Washington and it may be that Babcock labored to make the railroads and other corporations "lay down," as many people believed and still believe that he and Henry C. Payne did. The so-called Kress letters, published in 1902, have been cited to support this view. But Babcock engineered no deal between LaFollette and the railroads nor is he entitled to any particular credit for bringing about the nomination of LaFollette. The nomination was inevitable that year and it was doubtless the realization of that fact and the wisdom of being as agreeable as possible to the inevitable that influenced the astute railroad heads in the matter. Indeed at a meeting at dinner in the Grand Pacific hotel in Chicago that spring between LaFollette and Babcock the former told Babcock frankly that he did not expect to be able to work with him because their methods were directly opposed, he, (LaFollette) believing in working through the people from the bottom up, while Babcock's method was from the top down.

It is related that Babcock was informed at the Chicago headquarters by Henry C. Payne that nothing could prevent the nomination of LaFollette and that he replied with tears in his eyes: "I know it and I hate to see it." But Babcock realized that he needed the support of the heavy LaFollette element in his district to be renominated. At the state convention in 1898 he had

secretly worked against LaFollette until warned by the LaFollette men to desist if he valued his future prospects. Accordingly he did such marked work in LaFollette's interest in the campaign of 1900 that the assumed "Bob-Bab" alliance became a byword with certain opposition newspapers. Not only did many of his old opponents cease their warfare upon him, but they sought his camp. "LaFollette did not want their help—then," said one of his supporters of the time, "he would rather have beaten them that year; but they were so friendly we could not keep them out of the office."

It was hinted too in that legislative session that LaFollette had made the railroads some promise in a letter to Thomas H. Gill, attorney for the Wisconsin Central, which he was not observing. This letter, it may now be said, had been written by LaFollette with great care and in consultation with advisers, as it was felt it might be highly important in the future, but for some reason it never saw the light of publicity until brought out by Lincoln Steffens in his famous magazine article in 1904. That LaFollette had made the railroads no promises is shown by the letter, which follows:

Madison, Wis., May 12, 1900.

Dear Tom:

You have been my personal and political friend for twenty years. Should I become a candidate for the nomination for governor, I want your continued support, if you can consistently accord it to me. But you are the attorney for the Wisconsin Central R. R. Co., and I am not willing that you should be placed in any position where you could be subjected to any criticism or embarrassment with your employers on my account. For this reason, I desire to state to you in so far as I am able my position in relation to the question of railway taxation, which has now become one of public interest, and is likely to so continue until rightly settled. This I can do in a very few words.

Railroad corporations should pay neither more nor less than a justly proportionate share of taxes with the other taxable property of the state. If I were in a position to pass officially upon a bill to change existing law, it would be my first care to know whether

the rate therein proposed was just in proportion to the property of other corporations and individuals as then taxed, or as therein proposed to be taxed. The determination of that question would be controlling. If such rate was less than the justly proportionate share which should be borne by the railroads, then I should favor increasing it to make it justly proportionate. If the proposed rate was more than the justly proportionate share, in comparison with the property of other corporations, and of individuals taxed under the law, then I should favor decreasing to make it justly proportionate.

In other words, I would favor equal and exact justice to each individual and to every interest, yielding to neither clamor on the one hand, nor being swerved from the straight course by any interest upon the other. This position, I am sure, is the only one which could commend itself to you, and cannot be criticised by any legitimate business honestly managed.

Sincerely yours.

A conspicuous accession to the LaFollette ranks about this time was former Congressman Isaac Stephenson, the wealthy Marinette lumberman, whose relations with LaFollette and the latter's followers were to become historic. Whether the first advances toward the LaFollette-Stephenson alliance were made by emissaries of the Madison man, or originated in Marinette, is unimportant, but it is generally agreed that Stephenson's chief motive in taking up LaFollette's cause was to obtain revenge on Spooner and other old-time associates for not supporting his senatorial aspirations in 1899. By taking up with the new and rising leader he saw a possible opportunity for unhorsing Spooner and probably getting his seat himself. If LaFollette promised the senatorship to Stephenson at this time it is probable that he felt it a bargain which because of Stephenson's years he probably would not be called upon to observe, but the somewhat unpleasant necessity, if so he felt it, came all too soon. Like the true "sport," however, he observed the pact, if one existed.

"One day, I think it was in the spring of 1900," said a former law student in LaFollette's office, "we received

word that Unele Ike was coming to Madison and I was detailed to meet him at the train and be at his service generally. As Stephenson emerged from the train he carried a small hand satchel or suitcase and I reached for it to relieve him of it, whereupon he extended it out of my reach, gave me what seemed a suspicious look, and said he could carry it himself. Of course, it is not at all likely that Unele Ike carried rolls around in a satchel; it was more likely underwear; but I could not help thinking of the incident later when Stephenson was charged with financing the campaigns of LaFollette. I thought at the time that he suspected me of being a confidence man, and we both looked our parts for such game, I being young and dapper and he the seedy-looking one supposed to have a plentiful supply of the long green in his bag."

The amount of Stephenson's contributions to the LaFollette cause, by the way, was probably not known even by Stephenson himself, but it has been asserted by LaFollette leaders to have been about \$15,000. This does not include the large amount of money spent in the founding and maintaining of the *Milwaukee Free Press*, established as a LaFollette organ.

This reference to the founding of the *Free Press* serves to recall the letter written on the subject by LaFollette to H. P. Myrick, editor of that paper, September 11, 1905. When this letter was printed with great heads and wide margins on the front page of the *Free Press* in the spring of 1909 it created a sensation. Sprung in the crisis of the senatorial deadlock, its publication was designed to put Stephenson over the line, so to speak, through the added impetus of LaFollette's earlier tribute to him. Immediately the question was raised, "who ordered its publication?" but echo mocked the query.

The genesis of the letter is said to have been as follows: Some time after the election of 1904 Governor

LaFollette was requested by Mr. Myrick to write a word of appreciation of Mr. Stephenson. "His enemies are trying to discourage him and kill off the *Free Press*," said Myrick, "by saying that it can't succeed; that he will have to continue to carry it at great expense. They are also trying to stir up distrust between him and you. Now Mr. Stephenson is an old man and a word from you would offset all this and make him very happy, I am sure. I wish you would write me such a letter, not necessarily for publication, but one that I could show him and thus make him happy."

LaFollette's kindlier nature was touched by the appeal and he agreed to Myrick's request. When Myrick received the letter he showed it to Mr. Stephenson, who, as had been predicted, was greatly moved by it, and with tears in his eyes, as the story goes, begged Myrick to give him the letter that he might proudly hand it down to his grandchildren.

It will be observed that the letter was evidently carefully written; it is not fulsome, nor insincere, but such commendation as it contains is confined to Mr. Stephenson's worthy enterprise in founding and maintaining the *Free Press*.

February 16, 1909, the *Milwaukee Free Press* devoted a large part of its front page to a conspicuous display of this personal letter written by Governor LaFollette, dated Chicago, September 11, 1905, addressed to H. P. Myrick, editor of the *Free Press*, and reading in part as follows:

Then there is another side and a better and a nobler side to this *Free Press* proposition. Mr. Stephenson cannot overlook it and it is going to stand as one of the greatest and most enduring things in his remarkable life. It is this: The *Free Press* is a part of the history of the reform movement, which began in Wisconsin and has become the dominant idea in the great decade upon which we are now entered as a nation. The *Free Press* stands today as the only distinct representative of that idea among the newspapers of the country.

Mr. Stephenson made this paper possible. The paper made the fight for reform in Wisconsin a potential fact in the nation. It is the best supporter of the president, who has taken up the issue.

Mr. Stephenson has amassed an immense fortune. It is a great thing to have acquired a great fortune honestly in these days. But he is a multi-millionaire by sheer force of his business abilities and sagacity. The Rockefellers, Morgans, Armours, Swifts, and thousands of others, have secured their fortunes in violation of plain criminal statutes. Isaac Stephenson will be long remembered for his great business ability. But man cannot live by bread alone. Man's best fame cannot rest on wealth alone. In the last four years he has founded and maintained at great cost a great newspaper which is doing a noble work for the emancipation of government from graft—which is bringing government back to the people, which day by day is saying to the big corporations of Wisconsin: and the country: "Conduct your business in obedience to law and keep your corrupting hands off legislation."

To do this thing and make this paper a moral and political force in the restoration of government to the citizens is to wield a greater power and render a greater service to his state and country than falls to the lot of many men. The establishing and maintaining of the *Free Press* is Mr. Stephenson's best monument. It is an act of patriotism. His family and his friends and the history of his time will cherish it as the really greatest work of a great life.

The use of this letter by the *Free Press* also serves to recall a somewhat similar situation in 1912 when LaFollette's earlier tribute to Roosevelt was exploited to offset the severe strictures LaFollette was then passing upon the colonel. Soon after Mr. Roosevelt's retirement from the presidency Senator LaFollette took occasion to speak a word in praise of Roosevelt because of his attitude toward certain public questions while in office. Roosevelt and LaFollette were not then as good friends as they had been at the earlier part of LaFollette's senatorial career. The president had deemed it expedient to materially weaken a part of his legislative program relative to conservation and whose outlines he had requested Senator LaFollette to draw. As LaFollette had

put weeks of hard work at this he was disappointed to see it consigned unceremoniously to the junk heap. Then too there had been a scene at the white house between these two worthies. The president had twice sent an urgent request to LaFollette to call at the white house. Rising from a sick bed the senator went there, only to find that the president's sole object was to "call him down" for some alleged criticism the senator had privately passed on the president's change relative to public lands or something else. LaFollette did not relish being called from a sick bed simply to be brow-beaten, and leaning on a table and trembling with weakness he yet bearded the later lion-tamer in his den and gave him such a plain talk as perhaps a president has seldom received to his face, not forgetting to refer to the fact that he had been obliged to make his Wisconsin fight, not only without his (Roosevelt's) moral aid, but in the face of his opposition, and was therefore, not beholden to the president for a single favor. He admitted making the criticism and repeated it to the president's face.

The president finally sought to mollify the wrath of his visitor by lightly remarking that the senator was "a fighter after his own heart," and the incident closed with the senator's somewhat unconventional departure. When therefore LaFollette was later twitted for the tribute he had paid the retired president he made this explanation:

I was simply observing the ordinary rules of courtesy, and obeying the natural human impulse to speak kindly of the dead, as it were. It was expected that Roosevelt, crowned with the great honors of the presidency, and enjoying the love and confidence of his people as seldom a president had, would now pass into dignified retirement after the manner of Grover Cleveland, for instance. He had himself declared that he would not again be a candidate for the presidency and there was no reason for doubting his word. Accordingly such tributes as we paid were due him and to be expected.

Colonel Roosevelt thus had himself to blame that these

tributes were later to become the subject of sardonic raillery. In refusing to remain "dead," he could scarcely wonder that his mourners, as it were, should confess to a feeling of kinship with the victim of the confidence man. Their dignity appeared to have been put to mockery; their tears had fallen for a prestidigitateur, not a corpse.

At this juncture it may not be out of place to call attention to one or two features of the campaign of 1911 and 1912. When LaFollette's friends began grooming him for the presidential contest of 1912 his practical eye foresaw that the probable chief obstacle to securing the united progressive support would be Colonel Roosevelt. Strong and ambitious characters like Roosevelt's do not give themselves unreservedly to any cause not wholly their own. Some avenue is left open for exigencies; for the seizure of power by self should it seem possible and desirable. Knowing human nature, and particularly Rooseveltian nature, LaFollette foresaw the cloud which later was to wreck the progressive hope. Accordingly he laid down as a condition to his supporters that they would have to secure a pledge, if possible, from Roosevelt, that if he would not himself get behind the LaFollette candidacy he would at least not complicate the situation by himself becoming a candidate. The senator's friends later gave it as their understanding and belief that Roosevelt had practically agreed to this program.

Another condition exacted by LaFollette was that a sufficient fund be raised to make a dignified and thorough campaign; otherwise he would not assume the leadership. Money would be needed to contest the immense resources of the administration in power. When some \$30,000 had been pledged as an earnest of good faith and the Roosevelt bogie seemed to have been laid, the Wisconsin leader prepared to set in motion the machinery for capturing the nomination.

With the entrance of LaFollette in the field the other candidates for governor made no headway. Outside of their immediate territories the counties were going for LaFollette at the caucuses. It remained, however, for a decisive dual victory to flash LaFollette upon the mind of the state as the coming man. This was the carrying of Oconto county, the home of Governor Scofield, and Waukesha county, the home of "Long" Jones, also a candidate for governor, on the same day. How Oconto county was won for LaFollette was later described by Henry Johnson as follows:

In the spring of 1900 I was going to attend the state convention at Milwaukee to elect delegates to the national convention. Mr. T. E. Mills came to my house the night before I started and said to me: "Henry, go and see Bob LaFollette and tell him that we will give him some delegates from Oconto county, if he will run for governor." This being Scofield's county we were not supposed to elect LaFollette delegates. I met LaFollette at his room in the Plankinton hotel. I was introduced to him by H. E. McEachron of Wausau, and the first thing I said to him was, "Are you a candidate for governor? If so, we can assure you of some delegates from Oconto county." LaFollette looked at me and said, "You don't mean to say that I can have some delegates from Scofield's home county? If you can hold an early convention and give me a delegation from Oconto county, the fight is won. Go home and see what you can do."

I did so, we had the convention and a solid delegation for Bob marched into the convention at Milwaukee with a banner bearing this inscription: "100,000 Majority for Bob in November." It happened to be 103,000 majority.

The day before the caucuses were held in these counties Governor Scofield issued a long interview attacking LaFollette and declaring that he would consider it a great misfortune to the party were Mr. LaFollette to be nominated. Charging that LaFollette and his followers had cut him in 1898, he cited the town of Primrose, Dane county, LaFollette's native town, showing that while he (Scofield) had received 41 votes and his democratic opponent, Judge Sawyer, 68, the other re-

publicans on the state ticket had received about 100 votes and the other democrats on the state ticket approximately only 15.

"I do not hesitate," he declared, "to say that I should regard the success of Mr. LaFollette at this time as disastrous to the harmony and permanent interests of the party in Wisconsin. * * * * If the earnest and laborious efforts which I have made to promote the public interest and give Wisconsin a good administration are satisfactory to the people, am I not entitled to the endorsement by the nomination as my successor of a different kind of republican from Mr. LaFollette? And endorsement by resolution of a republican convention, followed by his nomination as my successor, would be a singular reward for hard service to the people and the party."

Nevertheless, such was to be the destined course of events. LaFollette declined to make any comment on the attack. However, in the caucuses the following day he swept not only Oconto county but both the assembly districts of Waukesha county. The overthrow of Seofield on his own ground on the day following his attack on LaFollette, and the practical elimination also of a rival on the same day elated the followers of the Madison man and correspondingly depressed the opposition.

On June 30, at the first assembly district convention in Waukesha, Senator Jones announced his withdrawal as a candidate. July 3 Mr. Bradford quit the race, followed by Senator Whitehead July 6, General Rogers July 14, and by Senator Stebbins July 24, leaving the field entirely to LaFollette.

Immediately on the defeat of Senator Jones in Waukesha county, Senator Whitehead had hastened to Madison, where, accompanied by Philo. A. Orton, James G. Monahan and Cham. Ingersoll of Beloit, he had a long interview with Senator Spooner, followed by another with Governor Seofield.

If Whitehead had expected to receive any comfort from Spooner he must have been grievously disappointed, for Spooner, who had a weakness for showing the white feather at critical times, was himself to startle the state and the nation and completely demoralize the opposition to LaFollette by also quitting the field, so to speak. On July 5, he gave out a statement announcing that he would not be a candidate for re-election to the United States senate on the expiration of his term in 1903. This statement, which was of considerable length and evidently prepared with the greatest care and deliberation, was at once interpreted as a recognition by Spooner of the "handwriting on the wall;" that LaFollette was the ascendant figure in Wisconsin and that his (Spooner's) political existence thereafter would be subject to the grace of LaFollette. Doubtless he saw little hope in that direction and pride, no less than want of stomach for a fight, determined him to turn his back on the new order of things whose coming seemed irresistible to his unresolute mind. As Senator Withee bluntly put it, "Senator Spooner is beaten anyhow, but he needn't have hollered so soon. Still it was a good play to get out now." The senator's announcement read as follows:

TO THE REPUBLICANS OF WISCONSIN.

There are to be elected in November 17 state senators who will participate in choosing at the legislative session of 1903 a United States senator for the term beginning on the fourth day of March of that year. Having unalterably determined not to be a candidate for re-election to the senate, I deem it my duty at this time to so declare. I have not since I was returned to the senate in 1897 entertained the purpose of being a candidate for re-election. On the contrary the only question which I have felt called upon to consider affecting my relation to the position has been whether duty to my family would permit me to serve out my term. It is, I think, neither usual nor ordinarily wise for one to form, much less to announce, such a purpose so long in advance, but as I am absolutely convinced that no change can come in my conviction of private duty in the matter, I feel that I rest under

an honorable obligation to be frank with my party about it and therefore to make public announcement of the fact. I have lately received abundant assurances, all of course unsought, from leading republicans in most of the 17 senate districts (differing in personal preferences upon other lines) of their earnest desire for my re-election to the senate and of their unswerving support. To permit the not unnatural assumption that I am a candidate for re-election to go without correction when in fact I am not a candidate would, it seems to me, be little if anything short of duplicity upon my part and this I cannot tolerate. Again, there are many republicans, among them long time friends and supporters of mine, well entitled by reason of ability, integrity, party loyalty and dignity of character, to be favorably considered for the succession, who might by my silence be deterred from candidacy to their detriment and to the detriment of the public interest. Moreover, the office is one of great responsibility and great importance to the people and they are entitled seasonably to know who are and who are not candidates for it in order that time may be afforded for that discussion and deliberation essential to correct judgment and wise action.

I communicated months ago not only my purpose not to be a candidate for re-election but my fear that I might not be able to serve out the term, with some of the reasons for it, in confidence to my colleague, Mr. Quarles, and to a few other friends. Absorbed in the important duties of the session recently ended and distressed by the serious illness of a member of my family, I did not consider whether duty required of me a public declaration.

No one, I hope, will consider me unappreciative of or indifferent to the honor which pertains to a seat in the United States senate honorably obtained. I will not admit that any man is more keenly sensible of its dignity and importance. It affords to one who comes to the discharge of its duties a proper sense of responsibility, a splendid opportunity for useful public service. All things considered, there is, in my judgment, no public position which is at all comparable with it.

While fully mindful of this I have not been nor am I able to permit it to influence me in the opinion that it is my duty for purely personal and private reasons to retire at the expiration of my term. Until that time arrives I most earnestly hope to be able to serve.

I cannot refrain from availing myself of this opportunity to again express to the republican party of Wisconsin my intense appreciation of the confidence which it has repeatedly manifested

in me and my profound gratitude for the honors which it has conferred upon me. No party could more graciously and generously bestow upon one of its members the highest honor in its gift than did the republican party of Wisconsin bestow upon me when it gave me in 1897 after six years of retirement a unanimous re-election to the United States senate. It has been to me an inspiration.

I hope it will not be deemed indelicate for me also here to express my appreciation of the evidences very recently afforded with remarkable unanimity by the republican press of Wisconsin of the continued confidence of the public in me. It certainly must be unnecessary for me in view of my relations to the party since 1884 to give assurance that this elimination of myself from direct interest in Wisconsin politics will not in any degree diminish my efforts to promote at all times the success of republican principles and of republican tickets in the state.

JOHN C. SPOONER.

Madison, Wis., July 5, 1900.

The abandonment of the field by all of LaFollette's rivals before half the delegates had been chosen proved what surprises the whirligig of politics can bring about. But a scant month before many politicians and newspapers had gravely doubted LaFollette's ability to secure the nomination. As stated, at a visit in LaCrosse, Judge E. W. Keyes of Madison had expressed his doubt about LaFollette carrying even Dane county. His most sanguine friends had never anticipated so sweeping a victory as that which was to result, or that the field would be clear before half the delegates had been elected. It was a sensation so novel that many raised the question, "where is the nigger?", "what's the game they're up to?" They half expected some coup was in contemplation. Indeed there was talk of bringing out another candidate to stem the rising tide of LaFollette's success, and J. B. Treat, Senator J. H. Stout and Congressman J. J. Jenkins were mentioned, but disheartened by the action of Senator Spooner and realizing the futility of opposition none would permit his name to be mentioned and LaFollette was permitted to come to the convention

at the exposition building in Milwaukee August 8 for an uncontested nomination.

In his previous contests LaFollette had stopped at the Plankinton house and avoided the Hotel Pfister, the headquarters of the old-line politicians, but now that he was master of the situation he resolved to take his place in the midst of them and also opened headquarters at the Pfister.

On the morning of the convention day four of the candidates who had been opposing LaFollette for the nomination, Whitehead, Rogers, Bradford and Stebbins, met in the Pfister hotel lobby and went to LaFollette's room where Colonel Rogers said: "Mr. LaFollette, we call for the purpose of striking our colors and surrendering to you. From this time forward we are all of us for Bob LaFollette."

The convention was a great and memorable affair although unmarked by contests which had characterized so many other like occasions. LaFollette had everything completely in his hands. The speech of Henry C. Adams as chairman was a notable effort.

Another feature of the speechmaking was the address of Gen. George E. Bryant placing Mr. LaFollette in nomination. In imitation of Roscoe Conkling's speech in eulogy of Grant at Chicago twenty years before, he began:

You ask from whence my candidate.
This my answer it shall be,
He came from the town of Primrose;
From a log cabin under the tree.

The tree was an oak of the primeval forest. In its broad, sturdy branches the boy first heard the whispering of the wind and the sweet songs of the wild birds. To climb its sturdy trunk to its topmost limb—symbolic of the triumph that awaits him on the dawning of the new century—was the first aspiration of this child of the frontiersman. Lad, youth and man have I known him, and he has never failed in fealty to a friend. Student, teacher, lawyer, statesman, his path from the opening in the forest

to this convention hall in the commercial metropolis of the state has been trod with honest steps. Gold could not buy him; flattery never swerved him; threats deterred him not. As persistent a fighter for the right as was the great chieftain, Ulysses S. Grant, when the battle is over and the foe surrendered he can say, 'Let us have peace,' with the same fervency as did the hero of Appomattox, etc.

The committee of notification consisted of A. H. Long, Isaac Stephenson, A. R. Hall, J. W. Babcock and N. P. Haugen.

As LaFollette entered the hall on the arm of the "tall syeamore from Marinette" the ovation given him was perhaps then unparalleled in the history of state conventions of Wisconsin. After years of arduous campaigning LaFollette had finally won a complete convention triumph, and his enthusiastic supporters were unrestrained in their exultation.

Said the *Milwaukee Sentinel*:

He was given a perfect ovation. The applause swept back and forth across the great auditorium only to die away and be caught up again. Men stood up and flung their hats in the air and shouted; women in the galleries stood up and waved their handkerchiefs, and over and above all this din arose the well-known yell of the University of Wisconsin. It was several minutes before Mr. LaFollette could begin his address although he tried to do so several times before he succeeded.

The nominee's speech was characteristic of the man and in keeping with the occasion. A great levee followed it, in the course of which the nominee had to shed his coat to be able to continue hand-shaking. Telegrams poured in upon him from all parts of the country. Even from the bullet-riddled walls of the American legation in far-off Peking, then the scene of the boxer uprising, came words of congratulation.

There were other human sides of interest. Mrs. LaFollette sat on the platform through the exciting scene of the convention apparently unmoved by the stirring occasion, her fan swaying rhythmically to and fro.

When her husband went by with the committee to make his speech a few persons saw a white-gloved hand go up and be swiftly pressed by him in passing.

"It is a wonderful day, isn't it?" said Mrs. LaFollette in one of the lulls.

"It would be foolish for me to say that I was not proud and glad and happy, but—now this will sound queer, yet it is true—I have been even prouder of Mr. LaFollette when he has suffered defeat. You see that, after all, is the supreme test, and I have always rejoiced at the way in which he has stood firm and staunch and undaunted when things went against him. That is the side of him that naturally I know more about than other people do, and that is the side of him, after all, of which I am proudest."

Mrs. Siebecker, the nominee's sister, who had come to Milwaukee to see her brother nominated, had the misfortune to sprain her ankle on the way to the train and had to be carried into the train by her husband and likewise carried by him to the hotel in Milwaukee and wherever else necessary. Little Robert, the nominee's five-year old son, apparently did not appreciate his father's prominence and feared he would get lost. Between keeping an eye on his parent and collecting badges he was a very busy youngster. This may be here mentioned since it was due to this same child that the nominee had to cut short his stay in Milwaukee and forego a reception, a sudden attack of illness requiring it, he hurried back with him to Madison.

Mr. LaFollette's return to Madison after the nomination was marked by a cordial demonstration on the part of the citizens of Madison regardless of party. Mayor M. J. Hoven, a democrat, issued a proclamation urging all citizens to meet at the Park hotel at 7 o'clock in the evening and march to the LaFollette home to show their appreciation of the distinction accorded to one of their

townsmen and the city. A great gathering resulted and led by a band it marched to the modest home of the nominee on Wilson street. Mr. LaFollette was much affected at this cordial outpouring of his neighbors and standing on the porch with Mrs. LaFollette on one side and Gen. George E. Bryant on the other he expressed his deep appreciation. In part he said :

Neighbors and friends: Thought is deeper than all speech; feeling deeper than all thought. If I could command tonight all the words that have been coined by the cunning of speech I would yet be but a poor bankrupt to voice the thoughts and feelings that surge over me and through me at this cordial and more than neighborly greeting that you have given me. * * * All the sweet and tender memories of that time (of his residence in Madison) come over me—my college days, the rounding out of my young manhood, the finding of my wife, my struggles as a young lawyer, the coming of our children—all return to me tonight. * * * I wish to say that if I am elected to the great office of governor of Wisconsin this greeting you receive tonight shall not be warmer than that I shall extend you then, and mindful of the great responsibilities of the office, and with the support of such good friends as you, I shall endeavor to be the governor of the whole people.

Then there were calls for Gen. George E. Bryant and in affectionate manner Mr. LaFollette placed one arm around the general and presented him as his second father. The general voiced the great pride he felt in the occasion and said he had long felt toward "Bob" as toward his own sons.

The fact that the old order was changing within the party was well set forth by Judge E. W. Keyes, who wrote the day after the convention :

The membership of the republican state convention yesterday shows that a great change has taken place in the forces that are in control of the party. In former years, running away back to the birth of the republican party, the state conventions have been largely made up of men who have been prominent as leaders of the party. In each county care was taken to elect men as delegates who had had experience in public affairs. As young men came to the front and took active part in campaigns they were

recognized and admitted to the party councils where they were trained for political work by those who knew the ways of politics. In that manner a perfect organization was maintained and to it was due the successive republican victories in the state. When reverses came occasionally through the operation of issues on which the majority of people arrayed themselves against the republican party the strength of the organization was such that it soon brought them back into line.

This convention is noted for the comparative absence of the old leaders save such as have identified themselves fully with the element which has come into control of the party. A new cult has arisen and has forced its way to the front. Never before were so many new faces seen in a republican state convention in Wisconsin. The majority are young men whose enthusiasm has taken the place of experience. Time will show whether such a radical change in control of the party organization is wise or unwise. It is sufficient to say that it is all the result of a popular movement throughout the state.

Because of the state of his health LaFollette had not expected to make a speaking campaign in 1900 and in fact early in the season wrote to Frank T. Tucker of Neillsville that on the advice of his physician he would make no speaking tour, but visit the various counties and confer with friends instead. However, his health improved and permitted a change in his plans.

The campaigning done by LaFollette in the seven weeks preceeding the election that year had never been approached by anyone in the state's history for a given time. Between the date of his opening at Milwaukee, September 19, and his closing at Madison, November 3, he traveled nearly 6,500 miles—more than the state's entire mileage—and visited 61 of the 70 counties of the state. In all he made 216 speeches. During the last three weeks when he traveled by special train he averaged ten speeches a day, the day speeches averaging twenty-one minutes in length and the evening two hours and nine minutes. His average day audience was estimated at 880 and his night audience at 2,100.

As one reads the reports of these speeches in the light

of the anti-corporation crusade made by LaFollette in the years immediately preceding and in the terrific factional warfare that followed at once after his first election, he is apt to be singularly impressed by the entire absence in them of any word or tone of bitterness or denunciation. There is no rasping of the railroads, no charge that they or other corporations were not paying their share of taxes, no criticisms of past legislatures or officials that had marked earlier addresses. The speeches were almost entirely along national lines, with primary elections alone urged as a state issue. Accordingly it is scarcely to be wondered at that many people thus suspected a deal had been made between LaFollette and the railroads, particularly since the railroads had apparently made no fight on his nomination. But the LaFollette policy in the campaign was apparently a carrying out of the spirit of his announcement as a candidate when he expressed gratification at the better feeling in the party and declared he would do all that he could consistent with principle to promote that harmony. At any rate he seems to have wisely chosen the course that would ensure him general support.

In an elaborate speech in Milwaukee, September 19, opening his campaign, Mr. LaFollette discussed broadly the national issues of the day, paying much attention to the anti-imperialistic charges of the democratic party and talking conventional republican prosperity doctrine. Toward the close he devoted about one-tenth of his time to a discussion of primary elections, largely academic, but raised no other state issues. The Milwaukee address was typical of those that followed.

So great was the enthusiasm over LaFollette and so pressing the demands for speeches from him that it was early discovered that the only way to meet the demands would be to employ a special train. To this Mr. LaFollette finally assented, and Gen. George E. Bryant, chair-

man of the state central committee, arranged for such special with the Wisconsin Central railroad and this train was used during the three weeks preceeding the election. It was stipulated that the committee was to pay \$40 each day to every road upon which the special ran in any day. Sometimes the cost thus ran up to \$120 a day. On the other hand the special had the right of way over all other trains so that the best possible time could be made. Mrs. LaFollette accompanied her husband throughout most of the campaign, as did Alfred T. Rogers, who had charge of the train schedules. During a good share of the traveling John Strange of Neenah, later lieutenant governor, acted as general utility man. Then there were newspaper representatives and usually a number of politicians in the party.

The campaign was marked by a number of interesting incidents. Mr. Strange composed some verses to the air of "When Johnny Comes Marching Home Again," which after the author had personally "tried them out" on the audience at Spooner were afterward sung at a number of other meetings. Two stanzas follow:

When voters go forth to vote this fall,
I think I hear,
A little, still voice, a-whispering: "
"Take keer, take keer,
Remember the days of '93,
When you voted out prosperity;
From good to bad is only a vote, you know."

LaFollette has stood in battle brave,
A good true man;
He built a platform in '98
Upon a plan
Which lacked but a plank to stand the test;
We have added that and will do the rest,
And we'll elect Bob LaFollette,
Because he's the people's man.

His banner day of speaking was probably October 23, when, beginning at Rhinelander at 8:45 a. m. and closing at Oconto at 11 p. m., he made fifteen speeches, speaking a total of seven hours and ten minutes. The day included 150 miles of travel and the reaching of 11,000 people.

Parades were features of many meetings, with brass bands and uniformed clubs and occasionally, as at Oconto, he was welcomed with the booming of cannon. Often the receptions took on unique forms. At Independence, a small north Wisconsin place, the citizens had built an evergreen arch over the track on which the special was to go and had adorned it with flags and bunting. At Little Suamico he held in his arms for a time a little three-year-old girl who was passed up to him while he talked, and carried away a great red apple forced upon him as a reward. Unusually demonstrative meetings were held at Superior, Janesville and Stoughton. At Janesville he was introduced by Senator Whitehead, a recent rival for the nomination, and here Col. E. O. Kimberly sang John Strange's campaign song. At Oakfield he found the people wearing yellow oak leaves in his honor and naturally had to submit to the pinning of one upon his own coat by one of the young women of the place. At Brodhead, where he had expected to stay only ten minutes, he was welcomed with the firing of cannon and drawn from his train to the town hall where he found 1,500 people awaiting him and where 44 little girls representing the states showered him with little bouquets. A total of twelve speeches were made on this day, at Shullsburg, Gratiot, Mineral Point, Platteville, Belmont, Darlington, South Wayne, Brownstown, Monroe, Brodhead, Orfordville and Beloit. A feature of the Dodgeville meeting was the reading by the candidate of a request handed him by a number of girls asking one of the teachers to excuse them for cutting school to come to the station to hear him.

These incidents serve to show the interest taken in the man and the warm place he had acquired in the hearts of the people.

Louis G. Bomrich of Kenosha, who became the democratic candidate for governor, was kept "on the map" for a time by a picturesque phrase of one of his supporters, who suggested for a war cry, "Bryan, Bomrich or Blood!" but was overwhelmed in the election landslide. With four candidates against him, LaFollette was elected by the unparalleled plurality of 102,745 votes and a net majority of 85,941. The vote stood: LaFollette, republican, 263,419; Bomrich, democratic, 160,674; Smith, prohibition, 9,707; Tuttle, social democratic, 6,590; Wilkie, social labor, 507; total, 440,897.



Home of R. M. LaFollette when elected governor. Wilson Street, Madison, Wis.

CHAPTER XII

Stirring Legislative Session of 1901.

LAFOLLETTE READS MESSAGE TO LEGISLATURE—DEMANDS PRIMARY ELECTION LEGISLATION AND ADVALOREM TAXATION OF RAILROADS—GREAT BATTLE OVER PRIMARY ELECTIONS—MEMORABLE NIGHT SESSION — GOVERNOR'S MEASURES DEFEATED — SENATE ADOPTS RESOLUTION OF CENSURE.

THE change of administrations in January, 1901, was to be more deeply significant to Wisconsin than perhaps the most far-seeing student of the times imagined. It was to mark the passing of an old order which harked back to the past, and the advent of a new one whose keener ear was responsive rather to the future. The traditional republicanism, exemplified in older men, controlled by conservatism, and holding to established routine, to party fetiches and aristocratic respectability, was to give way to a new ideal of service to the state, and a new type of public servant. The standard was to pass from old hands to young and past ideals and practices were to take the natural course of the outworn.

Governor Scofield was to be the last old soldier governor—in all probability. No longer was the bluecoat to be the familiar and dominant figure it had been for a generation; no longer was it to be sufficient for the party to rest on past achievements, on the prestige of a military renown. The new century with its changed conditions demanded a new consecration, and responsive to this demand a new civic conscience, appreciating its official and social responsibilities, had arisen. And with the beginning of the new century—the promised era of humanitarianism and democracy—it seemed appropriate that a native-born son of the state—the first to be elected to that high office—should be inaugurated governor.

Nevertheless it is probable that but few students of the time foresaw that the great battle which was to sweep away the old order and determine the issue of popular rule in the state was impending. The inauguration of Governor LaFollette January 7 differed in no essential respect from previous immediate functions of its kind. While he had opposed and deplored the election of LaFollette as his successor, Governor Scofield had met the usual demands of the occasion, though with severe formality, by escorting his successor to the assembly chamber to have the oath of office administered by the chief justice, although that formality ended he then promptly left the capitol and took no further part in the ceremonies. It was the usual festal day in Madison, culminating in a democratic inaugural ball in the university armory in the evening devoid of striking incident. LaFollette had been elected by the largest plurality ever given a candidate for governor and apparently by a united party in whose ranks all was now harmony and good will.

But that stirring and unusual times were ahead was foreshadowed when at the meeting of the legislature Governor LaFollette presented his first message. This was a remarkable state paper as such, the longest of its kind that any Wisconsin executive had so far written, and the governor lent an unusual and impressive character to it by appearing and reading it in person before the two houses in joint convention, a proceeding hitherto unusual in the state. Although taking over two hours in its presentation, it received profound attention, read as it was in the governor's impressive manner. Of strong literary form, there was no mistaking its authorship; it was no patchwork nor product of secretaries.

The message contained a number of striking departures from previous papers of its kind, the distinctive feature being an able essay on primary elections, in-

cluding even the advanced suggestion of second choice voting. Then there was a discussion of railway taxation, a recommendation that women be appointed on various educational and charitable boards and that the activities of the lobby be curbed by legislation. Although this first message was far less aggressive than many he was later to write, there was no glossing over of his meaning, and his characterization of the "political machine," of "tax-dodgers" and "lobbyists" as such occasioned comment.

That the legislature owed a responsibility to the people and that it was not to escape a reminder of that responsibility was rather shrewdly set forth in this introduction to his discussion of primary elections:

Commissioned by the suffrages of the citizens of this state, to represent them, you will have neither in the session before you nor in any official responsibility you may assume a more important duty than that of perfecting and writing upon the statute books of Wisconsin a primary election law.

In the meantime the legislature had been organized. George H. Ray of LaCrosse had been chosen speaker of the assembly. As marking the last proceedings of its kind, it is interesting to note that he and the other officers of that body had been chosen at a crowded caucus held at the Park hotel and dominated and directed largely by railroad lobbyists, as in the past. That the railroad interests were to be all-powerful again was to be shown in the makeup of the committee. This was illustrated in the case of A. R. Hall. The formality of asking members upon what committees they desired appointment was observed and Hall had requested the chairmanship of the committee on assessment and collection of taxes, indicating that through such committee if rightly constituted he hoped to be of value to the state. He was given the chairmanship but with the empty honor of a majority of the committee hostile to his ideas.

LaFollette's announcement that he intended to read his message in person to the legislature created a mild sensation at the time and provoked much curious interest. Hitherto the brief and conventional messages transmitted to the legislatures had been read by legislative clerks while the governors remained withdrawn in their chambered retreats. LaFollette's announcement therefore startled the attention of the state. It portended an aggressive activity on the part of the governor in the work of legislation, an assertion and assumption of the right of leadership. This might have been expected in such a character and such a dynamic force as LaFollette's.

The governor's office is in the main a clerical position, by courtesy made ornamental. It calls for no particular application of talents, no particularly hard work, no expert training or high efficiency, as proved by the average run of governors throughout the country. To such intense natures and teeming intellects as LaFollette's, however, the ordinary routine of signing requisitions and the commissions of notaries public could in itself offer small charm or receive serious attention. His conception of the governor's position was that the executive should do more than merely recommend legislation; that he should assist and direct it wherever possible. Such invasions and assumptions of the functions and prerogatives of one department by another are theoretically wrong under our system of government and will always be pointed out as a grave menace by the party or faction opposed to such invading department or official.

The warning so sounded is in the main justified. Experience appears to have concluded that in a democratic form of government such divisions of responsibility are desirable. Of course great good, and little harm, may come from the overreaching activities of wise and altruistic officials; constitutional limitations are not meant

for such, but for the chance incompetent, unprincipled or tyrannical ones, who now and then break into the political china shop.

After the firm demand in Governor LaFollette's message for the passage of a primary election law, the practical politicians in the opposition saw that the very citadel of their power was threatened and that political wisdom demanded immediate action in opposition to the governor's policy. Long before the proposed measure was introduced the primary election bill was heralded as the great issue of the session and was denounced and derided as visionary and dangerous. It was plain to be seen that a great struggle over it was imminent. In the meantime it soon became obvious that the apparent harmony between the opposing interests in the party was not of a permanent nature. Previous to the opening of the legislature a meeting of a dozen senators at Milwaukee gave rise to a rumor that the senate was to be organized in opposition to the governor's program, and on the meeting of the legislature the press repeated this story. A mysterious spirit of battle which appeared to have slept through the campaign, also suddenly seemed to animate the air.

In the stalwart story of the Wisconsin revolution, written by E. L. Philipp and E. T. Wheelock, this phenomenon is discussed as follows:

As the days passed it was noticed that an air of mystery was beginning to gather about the capitol building. Men were called to the executive chamber for conferences, it is true, but they were carefully selected from among their fellows, and the consultations were always behind closed, guarded doors. They were star chamber sessions of the most secret kind.

Long before any attempt was made to organize a faction in opposition to the governor there was a faction organized and disciplined to carry out his program. His line of battle was formed to fight a foe not yet in existence; his generals, aids and lieutenants were appointed and entered upon the discharge of their duties. The atmosphere of mystery that first enveloped the execu-

tive chamber only, spread to the entire capitol—legislative chambers, committee rooms, corridors, even the cloak rooms and closets. There were little gatherings where whispered consultations were held; there was evasion, suspicion, secrecy on every hand. Every employe in the statehouse that could be dragooned into the ranks was made a secret service agent in addition to his regular clerical duties. Two men would be talking in a corridor and a third would approach; instantly there would be warning glances exchanged and the two would separate, to be seen a few minutes later continuing the conversation. A true blue administration supporter would shy at the coming of an outsider as if the intruder were afflicted with a contagious disease, for the servant of the executive feared he would be suspected of disloyalty should he be caught in friendly converse with one not yet initiated into the sacred arcana and possessed of the countersign, grip and password.

All this may sound like a childish fairy tale to one who did not go through that experience, but it is the bold, literal truth, nevertheless. Those who visited the statehouse at Madison during that memorable session either on business or pleasure bent, became conscious at once of the changed atmosphere, the oppressive psychic force with which the capitol was charged, as with an electric current.

There is no great exaggeration in this picture, as observers of the period will remember, but it suggests the further fact that to espouse LaFolletteism in the early days frequently proved a trial of men's souls. Too often it meant business reprisal and social ostracism.

"You remember," said one Watertown man to another later, "how we once didn't dare to mention LaFollette's name without first going out in the alley or looking around to see if anyone was within hearing; we don't do that any more."

To return to the primary bill, over which the first of the two great battles of the session was waged. In the form which the administration desired it enacted the bill was finally introduced in both houses on January 28 by Assemblyman E. Ray Stevens, and by Senator George P. Miller, both being members of the committees on privileges and elections. It was a compre-

hensive measure, practically the present primary law of the state, and at once provoked general discussion and sharp divisions.

All the interests opposed to LaFollette united to discredit and defeat the measure and railroad attorneys and representatives of the federal "machine" were early on hand to fight it. Even the new Chicago editor of the *Milwaukee Sentinel*, following its change from an independent to a corporation sheet, had not been in his chair a week before he came to Madison and attempted to awe LaFollette and compel the governor to emasculate the measure, failing in which he returned to Milwaukee and wrote the first editorial of that paper attacking LaFollette and definitely committing that sheet to a tory policy. Then the *Sentinel* followed up its campaign by printing a series of articles seeking to show the failure of the primary in Minnesota and elsewhere.

So great was the interest taken in the measure that the first hearing upon it by the committee was made a great public occasion and staged accordingly. This was held on February 12. A great throng, which included partisans from both sides, was present to hear the arguments.

Henry C. Adams, dairy and food commissioner, appeared as spokesman for the measure. James G. Monahan, collector of internal revenue, spoke in opposition.

Thus were typified the two opposing forces struggling for the mastery of the state party, the revolutionists under LaFollette and the intrenched forces whose ultimate heads were the two United States senators from the state. The arguments were ably presented, Mr. Adams contending for the primary principle on the ground of the abstract right of the people to a direct hand in all nominations, and Mr. Monahan attacking

such ideas as populistie, unrepubliean, expensive and impraetieal.

The following day James A. Frear of Hudson, later assemblyman, senator, and seeretary of state, and Levi H. Baneroft, of Richland Center, later speaker of the assembly and attorney general, appeared in able defense of the bill.

Then followed a controversy preecipitated by the *Milwaukee Sentinel* as to whether or not the republiean platform had read "demand" or "reecommend", with referenee to primary legislation. The *Sentinel* asserted that the platform as read to the convention contained the word "reecommend", and that this was ehanged to "demand" in the copies given the press. Governor LaFollette, Zeno M. Host, and others praetieally settled this point by deelaring the original eopy contained the word "demand."

Final arguments on the bill were heard February 26, when Henry Fink of Milwaukee, also representing the federal machine as revenue eollektor, and H. H. Hayden, of Eau Claire, spoke against the bill, while H. W. Chynoweth of Madison summed up the arguments in its defense.

In a memorable all-night session which opened early in the evening of Mareh 19 before a erowded house feverish with antieipation, the bill was pushed to third reading in the assembly. After a eommittee substitute to the Stevens bill had been aeepted, E. A. Williams of Neenah, a stalwart leader, moved a eall of the house which earried. Of the five absentees several were at their homes and one or two in the eity. Several attempts to raise the eall proving unsueessful, the members eould do nothing while waiting the arrival of the absentees. The disereditable session that followed has been frequently painted in lurid hues. Song and jest and the eireulating liquor bottle were features. To hold

their forces in line the outside stalwart managers remained upon the floor and became so marked in their activities that finally on motion of one member, they, with others, were ordered to the lobby by the speaker. One member who had been in hiding in the city was finally brought in in an intoxicated condition. At 4 o'clock the next morning Assemblyman L. M. Sturdevant, a supporter of the measure, came in, but so did Assemblyman P. G. Duerwachter, stalwart, and their votes did not change the situation. Not until Assemblyman Price of Marinette county, who had risen from a sick bed, came in at 7 o'clock, was the call raised and the bill pushed to third reading, in a chamber now resembling in appearance the proverbial "hurrah's nest."

When in session later, A. R. Hall moved to compel the chairman on enrolled bills to report the bill that day, it again became necessary to drive the stalwart federal lobby off the floor, which was done on motion of Assemblyman David Evans.

On March 22 the Stevens bill passed the assembly by a vote of 51 to 48 in a brilliant two-hour debate before a crowded house, the speakers for the measure being Messrs. E. Ray Stevens, Frank A. Cady, and L. M. Sturdevant, and those against it being Messrs. M. M. McCabe, democrat, and C. A. Silkworth, Charles Barker, F. B. Keene and E. A. Williams, republicans.

The senate being decidedly anti-LaFollette, there was little hope for primary legislation in that body. After long hibernation in committee the bill came up for debate April 10, Senator Miller leading the fight for the measure and Senator John M. Whitehead the opposition. A day or two previously Senator Henry Hagemeister had introduced a bill for the nomination of county officers and delegates to conventions by primary vote. On April 11 the senate killed both the Stevens substitute bill and the Miller bill and various other amendments,

and passed the Hagemeister bill with a referendum clause proposed by Senator Kreutzer. The assembly then passed up to the senate another bill much like the Stevens bill, also with a referendum clause, but this the senate also killed. Thereupon the assembly concurred in the Hagemeister bill, Speaker Ray and Assemblyman E. J. Frost of Almond finally going over to the stalwarts and bringing this about.

Governor LaFollette promptly vetoed the Hagemeister subterfuge. This was expected, but the caustic and powerful message that accompanied the veto was scarcely looked for. Of rare lucidity, literary finish and argumentative power, this veto message takes high rank in that remarkable series of papers written by LaFollette on primary elections and is deserving of study by students in disputation.

"I cannot," said the governor, "divest myself of the binding character of my official obligation—not in any narrow partisan sense, but to all the people of the state—which forbids my sharing in the responsibility of giving them a law which violates that obligation and is manifestly so framed as to bring reproach upon the principle, even if it were at all possible to interpret or enforce it." Thus was ended the fight over primary elections at this session.

The second great fight of the session was over the so-called railroad taxation bill. Like the primary bill, this also was to be defeated and created a burning issue for the next campaign. The tremendous influence of the railroads with past legislatures was to be demonstrated anew as was the frailty of the average legislator when subjected without defense to the unprincipled machinations and pressure of high-priced and able representatives of corporations.

That the railroads were not paying their share of taxes had been long demonstrated by A. R. Hall, who at

every session since he first came to the assembly in 1891, had demanded investigation and legislation and backed up his demands with formidable statistics. The tax commission in 1899 had also reported that the railroads were not bearing their share of the burdens of taxation. With the advent of LaFollette it was felt that the issue had to be met, but again the policy of playing for more time, so often successful in congress and with legislatures, was successfully tried. When the bills for increasing the railroad taxes came up in the session of 1899 the railroad lobbyists cleverly diverted the threatened course of legislation by seizing upon the bill making the tax commission a permanent body. They promised that if such commission were established and railway taxation postponed at that session and that if later the commission should come to the conclusion that the taxes of the railway companies should be increased, and should so recommend to the next legislature, there would be no further opposition on their part.

Now when the tax commission at the opening of the session in 1901 declared that while it felt justified in confirming the first commission in its view that the railroads were not paying their share of the taxes, but was not prepared to say that the license fee system should be abandoned, there was rejoicing in the railroad lobby camp, for a new excuse to delay taxation increase was thus given. It gave new opportunity of playing for time.

Nevertheless, on January 31, two bills prepared by the tax commission were introduced in each house by Assemblyman Hall and Senator Whitehead, chairman of the taxation committees in their respective houses. One of these bills proposed an increase in the license fees of railroads, from four to five and one-half per cent and was estimated would increase the railroad taxes about \$600,000 a year.

The other proposed the taxation of railroad property on the advalorem basis as other property in the state. The tax commission had shown that while the real and personal property of the state were paying nearly seventeen millions in taxes the railroads were paying less than one and a half million and that were the railroads put on an advalorem basis as other property they would be required to pay slightly over a million a year more. The idea was to enact whichever bill the legislature thought it more advisable after due study and consideration. Long committee hearings followed. The railroads were represented by great and high-priced attorneys, while the chief defender of the bills and spokesman for the administration was Assemblyman Hall. The railroad attorneys urged the killing of both bills, urging delay because the tax commission had not completed its report and charging a discrepancy between the figures of the tax commission and those employed by the governor in his message. Hall constantly presented the unchallenged figures of the tax commission and thundered for equality in taxation. Soon, however, Hall broke down and was unable to attend the sessions for some weeks. In the meantime the railroad lobby was unceasingly active. It may be sufficient to quote on this score from a public statement made later by Assemblyman Lenroot in which he said:

Members were approached by representatives of the companies and offered lucrative positions. This may not have been done with any idea of influencing votes. The reader will draw his own conclusions. It was a matter of common knowledge that railroad mileage could be procured if a member was "right." Railroad lands could be purchased very cheaply by members of the legislature. It was said if a member would get into a poker game with a lobbyist, the member was sure to win. Members opposed to Governor LaFollette were urged to vote against the bill, because he wanted it to pass. A prominent member stated that he did not dare to vote for the bill because he was at the mercy of the railroad companies, and he was afraid they would ruin his busi-

ness by advancing his rates, if he voted for it. Such were a few of the methods employed to defeat the bill.

Before the bill was reported it was stated in the press and generally accepted that it would have the support of five members of the committee instead of only three and thus be favorably reported. Had the bill been reported when Chairman Hall wished it done such would probably have been the result, but at the request of a representative of the Wisconsin Central railroad Hall innocently and obligingly withheld the report for some time and in the meanwhile two of the five members at first reported favorable to the bill changed their attitude. It is said that the influence of a fascinating woman was an important factor in the ultimate defeat of the measure.

This betrayal of Hall's confidence was subsequently brought out in extended newspaper stories and amply verified.

April 10, Assemblymen Zinn, Lane, Brunson and McCabe reported the license fee increase bill for indefinite postponement. A minority report was presented by Assemblymen Hall, Stevens and Frost.

On April 23, after a debate in which Hall led the fight for the bill and Assemblymen Rossman, Orton, Williams and McCabe spoke against it, the bill was killed by a vote of 39 to 50. A number of friends of the bill voted against it because they preferred the *advalem* bill.

May 2 was one of the historic days of this historic session, one in which the governor and the legislature exchanged heavy blows and when the factional differences in the republican party were sharpened and intensified to the point that promised no hope of reconciliation, and making inevitable the decisive battle of 1904. Before the legislative sessions opened that morning Governor LaFollette laid before each house his

famous so-called dog-tax veto, promptly following which the assembly killed the railroad advalorem bill by a vote of 45 to 51, while the senate, on motion of Chairman Whitehead, withdrew both the railway tax bills from their pigeon-hole slumbers in that body and killed them without debate.

Thus the fight for increased railroad taxes ended again in a complete victory for the railroads.

Of another railroad bill at this session a word may be not amiss. This was the Hall railway commission bill which the statesman from Dunn had repeatedly introduced before. This was killed in the assembly April 24 by a vote of 74 to 24. At the request of Governor LaFollette, Hall made no fight for this measure. Governor LaFollette believed it the part of political wisdom to avoid attempting too much at once, and in the campaign the previous year had induced Hall to refrain from attempting to get a railway commission plank into the platform. "We must not scatter our fire," he said. "Let us first put through our primary elections and railway taxation bills." However, to be consistent with his past record Hall reintroduced his railway commission measure in 1901 and permitted it to die.

The so-called dog tax veto, to which reference has been made, illustrated LaFollette's keen sense of dramatic values. While the legislature was temporizing and marking time over the railway taxation measures a rather insignificant bill for a license on dogs came to his desk. The governor seized the occasion to veto it with a scathing message upbraiding the legislature for seeking to impose an additional load upon the overburdened farmer by taxing his natural protector, yet was apparently willing to again let the railroads withhold their unjust millions due in taxes. In part he said:

No serious attempt has been made by the opponents of this proposed legislation (railway taxation) to disprove the accuracy of the figures which formed the basis of the tax commission's

calculations. The best excuse or argument presented by the advocates of delay, who thus favor imposing a still greater portion of the tax burden upon the property within the state already bearing an undue share, appears to be the claim that the corporations paying less than their fair share of taxes should not be compelled to pay any more because some kinds of personal property escape the assessor altogether. It is a complete answer to this to say that one citizen should not be permitted to shirk some of his obligations because his neighbor has succeeded in evading all public duties.

The propositions of the tax commission, like its statistics, are too plain and simple to permit misunderstanding or doubt in intelligent minds which give them consideration. They cannot be obscured by a selfish plea that property which can be reached by the tax gatherers should be allowed to escape a part of its just share of the cost of government, at the expense of property now paying a still greater share, until that very uncertain and remote time when campaign promises and legislative procrastination conjoined will result in bringing hidden and intangible property within reach of the tax officers. Nor is it probable that a majority of the people of Wisconsin can be satisfied by framing appropriation bills in accord with the theory that citizens will bear the imposition of unjust and unequal taxation so long as the increase of their burden is made to appear to be due to the betterment and support of the public schools. When the taxpayer comes to compute profit and loss it cannot change the result because the increase in his taxes, caused by neglect properly to tax powerful corporate interests, comes through a bill making increased appropriations for common schools. * * *

For the reasons herein stated I am unwilling to present to the people of this state, in lieu of the legislation to equalize taxation which has been promised to them, and which they have a right to expect from representative government, a scheme, which, in a general way, may be described as an act to relieve the farmer or city home-owner of a small measure of increased tax upon his realty by imposing a license fee upon his dog.

The contrast thus afforded in the dramatic balancing of the great railway tax measure against the dog license bill drove home to the common mind, as perhaps nothing else could have done, the subserviency of the legislature to the great corporations and redounded immensely to the governor's advantage. The paragraphers rejoiced

in it, although the *Milwaukee Sentinel* rather obtusely observed that, "it was peculiarly undignified for Governor LaFollette to have taken this action upon so insignificant a measure as the licensing of dogs."

So keenly did the thrust come home to the senate that Senator Roehr promptly introduced a resolution of censure holding "that the use of such expressions as are above specifically referred to transcend all bounds of official propriety and constitutional right. We protest, therefore, most earnestly as members of the legislature against the aspersion cast upon our official acts, upon our personal motives and upon our private characters by the governor in his message to the legislature."

One of the longest and most striking debates of the session followed on this resolution to censure the governor. At times the chamber seemed to rock with passion, while the solemnity with which some members seemed to regard the proposed step recalled the scene, said an observer, when Jeff Davis retired from the United States senate to cast his lot with the confederacy. However, the resolution of censure was adopted.

CHAPTER XIII

The Republican League and Its Activities.

GREAT ORGANIZATION FORMED FOR DEFEAT OF LaFOLLETTE—HEADQUARTERS ESTABLISHED IN HERMANN BUILDING, MILWAUKEE—BIG CHAIN OF NEWSPAPERS SUBSIDIZED AND SERVED FROM LEAGUE OFFICE—PURCHASE OF PRESS EXPOSED BY HENRY E. ROETHE AND JOHN J. HANNAN—GOVERNOR BECOMES DANGEROUSLY ILL—DECLARES FIGHT MUST GO ON.

FLUSHED with victory, the stalwart allies in the legislature at the close of the session conspired to crush LaFollette in the next campaign. Both primary elections and railway taxation had to be beaten. If now LaFollette could be defeated for reelection, they reasoned, a quietus would be put on his agitations. Confidence inspired the opposition. In the administration campaign handbook of the year following A. R. Hall said:

It was boastfully stated by a representative of one of the railway companies just after the defeat of the railroad taxation bills at the last session of the legislature, that no bills had been enacted into law during the sixteen years last past in the interest of the people when objected to by the railroads. He spoke the truth, and he ought to have added that no measure, no matter how damaging to the interests of the people, failed to become a law if wanted by the railways.

Accordingly, a meeting of the stalwart members of the legislature was called in Milwaukee early in August and the formation of the "Republican League of Wisconsin" followed. In the administration press this organization took the name of the "Eleventh Floor League," from the fact that the headquarters were opened on the eleventh floor of the Hermann building in Milwaukee. This was the biggest organized party rebellion ever formed in the state.

A characteristic feature of the initial meeting was

secrecy. Perhaps no greater or more significant tribute of respect was ever paid LaFollette than that accorded him by the so-called "telephone convention" held in Milwaukee in June, 1910, when several hundred stalwart "delegates"—elected by telephone and chiefly by one leader—met for the purpose of bringing about, if possible, the defeat of LaFollette for reelection as United States senator that year. This was the chief, almost the only purpose of that convention, yet so conscious was the gathering of the public sentiment in Wisconsin toward LaFollette that neither in the speeches made in the convention, nor in the resolutions adopted, was the name LaFollette once mentioned and only in most circuitous phrase was he attacked.

Something like this fear of the man and the righteousness of his cause was apparently felt by the members of the league at their first meeting in 1901. Although the meeting was held in Pfister's own building and although the *Free Press* "played it up" under big headlines and twitted its contemporary sorely over it, the *Sentinel* said not a word about it, in spite of the fact that immediately after the adjournment of the legislature it had a "call-to-arms" editorial headed "Where Do You Stand?" Even United States Senator Quarles, who had been one of the speakers at the meeting, and given the movement the endorsement of the federal machine, when asked if the organization would fight LaFollette replied with mock sincerity: "No, that is not the object; LaFollette is a mere incident." State Senator Rochr is reported to have said: "It was merely an informal meeting of a lot of good fellows come together to talk about the weather, the crops and other things." Senator ("Long") Jones was more frank: "Just think," he said, "it will be a year tomorrow since Governor LaFollette was nominated unanimously, and think of the meeting here today! Does it not show a great change among

the people? It will not be that way in the next convention."

On August 18, 1901, the league issued its first manifesto, the keynote and substance of which was the following paragraph: "As representatives of the people we view with alarm the persistent effort to strengthen the executive at the expense of the legislative department of the state."

This statement was signed by eighteen senators and forty-one assemblymen, who formed the nucleus of the league, and included the total stalwart strength of the legislature, and two assemblymen who had generally voted with the LaFollette forces. Senator W. G. Bissell of Lodi, a former ardent LaFollette supporter, was made president, and Dan B. Starkey, a trained newspaper man of Milwaukee, secretary of the league.

Sumptuous headquarters well stored with good things were opened and a corps of newspaper men, clerks, and stenographers installed. Anti-LaFollette literature of great variety was sent broadcast over the state. In addition an elaborate card index was installed wherein it was sought to list every voter in the state with complete data concerning his political and factional bias, age, religion, business, and general standing in the community, etc. To install this elaborate service a trained expert was brought from Nebraska and paid \$10,000 according to the *Free Press*. Syndicated editorials and news letters attacking the administration were furnished the press free of charge and a large number of newspapers were directly subsidized in the stalwart cause, the administration charging that the number was over two hundred and that from \$50 to \$1,500 apiece was paid. It is highly important that this fact of the wholesale purchase of the press of the time be known to the historian of the future that he may properly gauge the worth and extent of the opposition to LaFollette while

browsing through files of the period. The exposure by Henry E. Roethe, editor of the *Fennimore Times*, of attempts to buy up his editorial columns, followed by like exposures from other independent editors, was among the sensations of the year following. These exposures were brought about by John J. Hannan, later private secretary to Governor LaFollette. Hannan at the time was on the staff of the new *Milwaukee Free Press*, which, ironically enough, came into possession of much of the equipment and furniture of the league when it broke up.

In this connection the founding shortly before this of the *Milwaukee Free Press* should be recorded as among the events of this period from which flowed important results. The *Milwaukee Sentinel*, which had for years been the chief republican organ of the state, had been a supporter of LaFollette. By reprinting from an Indianapolis paper a reflection on Charles Pfister, it became involved in a damage suit brought by the big Milwaukee boss. In February, 1901, before the case had been brought to trial, Pfister had purchased the *Sentinel*, damage suit and all, at a great price, and at once transformed it into a stalwart organ and spokesman and apologist of big interests generally. This created the need of a metropolitan administration organ which was met by the establishment in June, 1901, of the *Milwaukee Free Press*. Isaac Stephenson, the wealthy Marinette lumberman and politician, gave the new publication its chief backing.

* * *

The defeat of his measures in the legislature and the aggressive following up of this advantage by the stalwarts, made LaFollette but the more determined to continue his fight, and was to give a striking illustration of the rare fiber in the man.

Soon after the legislative session ended he suffered a

complete physical collapse. The great physical and nervous strain of the long session, with its bitter controversies, labors and anxieties, he had borne up under through sheer power of will, but, the strain of the session removed, an old stomach trouble suddenly returned to plague him.

In treating his ailment it became necessary for his physicians to resort to heroic remedies. Every day, and frequently each day, he was obliged to swallow a rubber tube to have his stomach washed out and to have the effect of various foods studied. For weeks he was dangerously ill and there were startling rumors of decline, and that he was a cancer victim.

One night a rumor reached the far-off city of Superior that the governor's death was momentarily expected. A band of his close friends and supporters resolved to sit up and await the final sorrowful news. So this, they observed, was to be the end of LaFollette's long fight, and, of their own sacrifices. They were a sorrowful group. Happily their fears were not realized.

During this period of illness a number of the governor's close personal and political friends called at the executive residence to offer such cheer as they might. In a friendly way former Governor Hoard urged him to conserve his health for the sake of his family. He said it was the opinion of the physicians that the governor should avoid the fight he contemplated making in the next legislature, and admitted his own weariness and discouragements. When LaFollette spoke he said feebly:

It has been a hard fight. I do not feel that I have any right to call upon even my closest friends to make any further sacrifices. But with me it is different. This is the work that I have laid out for myself. I have started the fight and if God spares my life, I will keep it up until we win. The fight must go on.

When the men left the room there were tears in the ex-governor's eyes as he said to John Strange: "That

man's courage and tenacity of purpose are sublime. Compared to him we are cringing cowards and crying children."

They passed out of the room, seeming yet, as one of them afterward related, to hear the words: "The fight must go on; the fight must go on!"

CHAPTER XIV

Great Contest of 1902.

EARLY SPEECH BY LAFOLLETTE BEFORE FARMERS' INSTITUTE SHOWS DETERMINATION TO ACHIEVE PRIMARY REFORM—STALWARTS COMPLICATE ISSUE BY CRY OF "RETURN SPOONER"—WHITEHEAD BROUGHT OUT TO OPPOSE LAFOLLETTE—GREAT ACTIVITY OF STALWART LEAGUE—ADMINISTRATION ACHIEVES COUP BY HAVING CONVENTION SET FOR MADISON—LAFOLLETTE RENOMINATED—CONVENTION INCIDENTS—QUALIFIED ENDORSEMENT OF SPOONER—VOTERS' HANDBOOK A NOTABLE PAMPHLET.

THE opening of the year 1902 gave promise of a desperate factional struggle. That the opposition to LaFollette would spare no effort to defeat his renomination was an inevitable corollary of the so-called "Eleventh Floor" venture.

Likewise, if any doubt existed of an aggressive campaign by LaFollette it was quickly dispelled through a speech made by him before the farmers' institute at Oconomowoc, March 19 of that year. In this significant address Governor LaFollette indicated unmistakably his determination to achieve genuine primary reform and uniform taxation, saying:

But that the legislature failed to perform its duty should not be a cause for discouragement. It should but quicken the interest and make firmer the determination of every citizen in the state. There should be no wavering and no delay. Equal and just taxation must come. Selfish interests may resist every inch of ground; may threaten, malign, and corrupt; they cannot escape the final issue. That which is so plain, so simple and so just will surely triumph.

Events moved rapidly. In strategic brilliancy, in rapidity of execution, in originality and dash, it was a sort of Marengo campaign on LaFollette's part.

In February came the exposures in the *Milwaukee Free Press* of the wholesale attempt of the stalwart league to

buy up the Wisconsin press. This proved a body blow to the influence of the league. A number of high-minded editors who found that they had been imposed upon repudiated the league support, while others not yet won over, turned peremptorily from their doors the league emissaries who later visited them.

One day a stranger walked into the office of the editor of a struggling weekly in the northern part of the state. Introducing himself under an assumed name, he inquired blandly relative to the circulation of the paper, the character of its constituency, etc., and finally declared the purpose of his visit was to secure space for the publication on the editorial page each week of certain political matter which would be furnished. Feigning some reluctance about considering the proposition made him, the editor succeeded in drawing out his mysterious visitor and getting a preliminary offer of a check for \$1,000. As he still demurred in order that he might extract additional information, the offer was gradually raised. But one after another the propositions made him he met with evasions or refusal.

"Would you consider \$5,000?" asked the visitor finally, with a half-jesting, half-serious intonation.

"No," replied the now transformed genius of the dingy sanctum. "I recognize your true character at last. You are a political scavenger from the Hermann building. I can have nothing to do with you. You have insulted me beyond measure, asking a man to sell his very soul. I cannot conceive how you could stoop any lower. There is the door!"

The visitor reddened and standing his ground said threateningly: "You have insulted me, calling me such names as you have, and you shall answer to me in court for it!"

Picking up a heavy mallet the editor advanced upon his tempter. "Clear out of here!" he shouted; "not

another word; and I further warn you to never let me hear from you again.”

The visitor rapidly backed out of the office and the editor heard no more of him, but soon thereafter a rival sheet farther down the street appeared in espousal of the stalwart cause. The second editor approached proved far more mild-mannered and pliable than the first and let his columns go for the campaign for \$900. So the visit of the stalwart agent to the town was not fruitless after all, and he could have but the one regret that fortune had not more kindly directed him on his first arrival there. But the experience was all in the day's work of that character and could be expected.

Historical completeness would require the further somewhat curious record that both of these editors were shipwrecked on the rock of LaFolletteism. The one who sold himself out was soon afterwards repudiated and deserted by his constituency for so doing, while the other, who remained unpurchaseable, went down through his zeal for the reform cause, which led him to neglect his paper's interests until he was overwhelmed with disaster.

In a sketch of LaFollette prepared that year by Ernest N. Warner of Madison a comparison was suggested between LaFollette and Hannibal, the Carthaginian general, who, abandoned by his plutocratic nation and cut off from all supplies from home, raised an army out of the barbarians about him and not only maintained himself in a hostile country, but for years defeated every army the great empire of Rome sent against him. The comparison was not so far-fetched. LaFollette faced a most trying situation at this period. A powerful opposing organization, backed by great resources of money, had been formed within his party; his health was seriously impaired, and so far from having any surplus money his organization had a large debt from the previous campaign to meet.

To repair his health, the governor early in the spring took a cottage at Lake Kegonsa, fourteen miles from Madison, and by horseback rides between that point and the capital recouped his strength. Borrowing \$1,000 himself, he started a campaign fund with that sum, while devoted friends—some of them quite poor—stretched themselves to the utmost to add to it.

The campaigning that year was exceeded in sharpness only in the great contest two years later. In the pre-convention campaign the administration side pressed the issues of endorsement of Governor LaFollette, primary elections and railway taxation, while the stalwarts at first made their fight on the personality of LaFollette. Realizing, however, that this was an unpromising issue alone, they created another by demanding the re-election by the next legislature of Senator John C. Spooner. When it became apparent in 1900 that nothing could stem the LaFollette tide, Spooner, in seeming fear, as has been shown, addressed a letter to the republicans of Wisconsin, announcing that he would not again be a candidate for the senate. Then without coming home from Washington he bought a summer home in New Hampshire and going there remained away from the state until a few days before the end of the campaign. Now by a strange contingency he was again made a candidate, without his own seeking, not so much that he might be returned to the senate as that thereby LaFollette might be defeated through a new party alignment which it was hoped to create.

Although the administration side in its handbook disclaimed opposition to Spooner, the stalwart organs vigorously fanned the flame of a supposed feud between the governor and the senator and this was undoubtedly the principal capital that yielded the stalwarts results in the campaign. The stalwart machine strength was centered upon State Senator John M. Whitehead of Janes-

ville, an outspoken foe of LaFollette, who announced his candidacy for the governorship as early as February 24. To further his candidacy Whitehead wrote a long series of heavy letters, principally on the subject of taxation, but it is doubtful if they made him any votes. Of these letters the stalwart history of the period says: "When passions were at white heat and no man who took part in the campaign in any capacity, much less a candidate, could escape personal abuse, these letters and the public addresses later delivered by Senator Whitehead were anachronisms."

The *Milwaukee Sentinel* and other league papers had early in the year raised a great cry to "Return Spooner" and it early showed results. For instance, by this slogan, coupled with quick action, the stalwarts succeeded in capturing the machinery of the republican club of the University of Wisconsin, electing T. P. Abel, of Kenosha president over Harry W. Adams of Black Earth. Prospective candidates for the legislature were early visited and promised stalwart support if they would pledge themselves for Spooner, a move that was successful in many instances, in moderating the activities of such candidates. Even a number of the big newspapers of the state, who had supported LaFollette, yielded to the arguments of the league, pleading in excuse the necessity of returning Spooner. On April 26 the *Oshkosh Northwestern*, a LaFollette supporter, began its desertion of the governor by an editorial headed "Spooner Should Be Endorsed." While professing to favor the renomination of LaFollette, it took the position that it was easier to find gubernatorial timber than another senator like Spooner. About the same time the *Wisconsin State Journal* at Madison began wavering. Its new editor, Amos P. Wilder, had been a strong supporter of LaFollette, but coming from aristocratic environments in the east, he could not stomach the LaFollette practice of

advancing to places of power and respectability men from farms and small country towns. Declaring editorially that LaFollette was surrounded by "men whose characters are objectionable and whose qualifications are pitiful," he sought for a time to support the opposing ideals represented in Spooner and LaFollette, but finally went over wholly to Spooner and the stalwart cause, after bearing the ridicule of practically the entire Milwaukee press for his indecision.

However, the "half-breed" movement, as the LaFollette cause now came to be derisively called by the opposition, was not without its literary resources. Printer's ink had always been a strong reliance with LaFollette and in this campaign it took the form of a "Voters' Handbook." This was a political publication of 144 closely-written pages and made its appearance about May 1. It gave a history of the legislative session of the year before, roll calls on all important measures, the story of the Republican League, and a mass of other political history and argument from the administration point of view. For historical completeness and literary effectiveness, it is the high water mark of individual political pamphlets in Wisconsin, and it is safe to say it greatly influenced results in the campaign. Aside from contributions from Assemblymen Hall, Lenroot and David Evans, Jr., it was largely the work of LaFollette himself, his private secretary, Col. Jerre C. Murphy, and John J. Hannan. The expenses of its publication and distribution were met by about twenty-five of LaFollette's most prominent supporters throughout the state.

Copies were sent to almost every voter in the state. Various circular letters were also sent out. One issued from a Madison law office June 25 contained in part this startling language, indicative of the lengths to which the contest was being waged:

"The events which occurred here a few days ago

should serve as a warning to the entire state. The Bolters' league spent thousands of dollars of corporation money in Dane county in an effort to carry the caucuses. League supporters have boasted that \$25,000 of this money was used in the city of Madison alone. Tickets folded with \$10 bills were covertly passed to voters by workers with the request to vote the one and pocket the other and say nothing. This work while done with a certain degree of caution covered so large a field as to lead to frequent rejection and discovery."

The reform cause also had able pamphleteers and volunteer contributors who championed it on high ethical grounds. Among such was Theron W. Haight of Waukesha, whose writings were notable for their power and literary finish.

One of the sensational incidents of the early part of the campaign and productive of many long newspaper stories was the break between Congressman H. B. Dahle of Mt. Horeb and Governor LaFollette.

While LaFollette was making his various campaigns for the governorship several shrewd and desperate attempts were made to carry Dane county against him in order that through repudiation at home he might be weakened in the eyes of the state. To effect this end the Norwegian nationality, which was strong in the county, was drawn upon for stalking horses, and in this manner a number of bitter opponents were raised up who proved to be thorns in the side of LaFollette, until he had grown beyond their power of effective injury. Thus in 1898, John L. Erdall, a brilliant young Norwegian lawyer of Madison who held the position of assistant attorney general, became a candidate for attorney general. His announcement brought about an embarrassing situation when LaFollette later decided to enter the field for governor, as, naturally, no state convention could be expected to put two men from the same county

on the ticket. One or the other would have to give way. Mr. Erdall chose to stay in the field, however, and went down to defeat, the county convention electing LaFollette delegates to the state convention and turning down the proposed list of delegates for Erdall, who thus failed of nomination. Soon afterward Erdall left the state to enter the service of a great corporation, thus closing the door on what his friends believed, and still believe, he could have commanded in the state, a brilliant professional and political future.

This scheme to take the county from under LaFollette by pressing another local candidate for the state ticket was again tried in 1902 when Nels Holman of Deerfield was brought out for secretary of state. Holman was of Norwegian descent, editor of the *Deerfield News*, and through long and conspicuous service on the county board had built up a wide acquaintance and influence in the county. He also was to meet with disaster on the test of strength with LaFollette at the county convention. From having been an early supporter, Holman thus became a bitter enemy of the governor and waged relentless war on him thereafter, and occasionally carried his town against him.

Another Norwegian of some influence in the county who also became arrayed against the governor this year was Torger G. Thompson of Cambridge. Thompson was a wealthy land owner who had served a term in the assembly and who, while friendly to LaFollette in the beginning, soon became a violent opponent of the governor. In 1904 he was brought out as a candidate for state senator, but failed of nomination.

By clever manipulation, aided by certain misunderstandings, the same forces brought about an estrangement between the governor and Congressman Dahle, a hitherto lifelong friend and supporter of LaFollette, after Dahle had served two terms in congress. It was



STATE OFFICERS, 1903-07

1—Robert M. LaFollette, Governor. 2—James O. Davidson, Lieutenant Governor. 3—Walter L. Houser, Secretary of State. 4—John J. Kempf, State Treasurer. 5—C. P. Cary, State Superintendent. 6—L. M. Sturdevant, Attorney General. 7—John W. Thomas, Railroad Commissioner. 8—Zeno M. Host, Insurance Commissioner.

one of the regrettable incidents of this eventful period, a political tragedy that terminated the public career of the congressman and left many ranklings behind.

It were a gross injustice to attribute ulterior or unworthy motives to all the so-called stalwarts. As is the case over all issues and regarding all forceful men, there were honest differences of opinion. Many stalwarts were more honest and better patriots than many in the camp of reform; many opposed the governor because they did not know the man, misunderstood him or were misled regarding him. It is a significant fact that where LaFollette is best known he has always been firmly rooted in the confidence of the people and that in the campaign of 1902 and again in that of 1904 the counties that he visited came over, as a rule, to his support, while those that he left out of his circuit frequently showed indifferent or hostile returns. Many also wearied of the long fight; many of hearing Aristides called just. A large class was actuated in its opposition by petty and sordid personal interests, while many of the older voters who believed in the fetich of party loyalty through good or evil report—whose vision was retrospective—frowned upon the departures which threatened to disrupt and divide the grand old party. The active and interested opposition came, however, from the big corporations who saw in LaFollette's ascendency a menace to the continuation of their privileges, and from the old wheel horses of the party, the governmental agents of these interests, who also foresaw their tenures of office and privileges in jeopardy. Upon all these previously named elements—the indifferent, the unknowing, the wavering, the mercenary—the big interests played with all the cunning that ingenuity could devise and all the power that wealth could command.

Illustrative of the sharp practices referred to was an incident from the far northern part of the state. It was

highly important that a certain ward of a city be carried by the LaFollette forces, as with the carrying of this ward went the vote of the whole county. This ward was controlled by a saloonkeeper in whose resort centered all the disreputable interests of the city. To secure the ward political sagacity demanded the winning over of this northern Hinky Dink.

Two LaFollette workers, both of whom have since become more or less prominent in state and national affairs, accordingly went to his resort one Sunday afternoon. Waiving the proffered drinks which the somewhat surprised saloonkeeper sent spinning before them, they accepted cigars and in due season broached their proposition of a "political trade."

"If you'll deliver the ward to us, and we win, you can have the naming of the next inspector of the district," said one.

"Well," replied the flattered boss slowly, "I kin deliver the ward, and I spose yer word is good."

"You can depend upon it."

Agreed. More cigars and exit emissaries.

The ward was duly delivered and the county carried. Later, by the way, when LaFollette had been nominated, elected and inaugurated the same emissaries presented themselves before the resort keeper to observe their part of the pact. Stroking his ruddy jaw, the rotund boss observed with a twinkle: "Yez said I might have the naming of the next inspector. Well, I think I'll take the job myself."

The emissaries nearly wilted at this unexpected development, but the bargain was a bargain, they declared, and should be kept. The saloon man was duly appointed. But it was the last pact made with him; no further political relations with him were maintained. Failing of reappointment, he sought in the following election to swing his ward against LaFollette, but did not succeed.

LaFollette now had the county and his grip upon it has remained unshaken since.

There were phases of the preliminary skirmishing of a lighter nature. One of the charges brought against LaFollette was that he had proved himself unfriendly to the old soldiers by letting out a number of veterans who had positions in the capitol under Governor Seofield, whereupon M. J. Rawson, a LaFollette soldier appointee, issued a letter showing that at the close of Seofield's administration there were thirty-nine old soldiers in and around the capitol with an annual pay roll of \$42,760, while in 1902 there were forty on the list with a pay roll of \$45,416, thus showing a close shave in LaFollette's favor.

However, LaFollette was not fortunate in his relations, on the whole, with the old soldiers. In every section of the state they were found among his most bitter opponents, although no one had been more energetic and successful in securing pensions for his veteran constituents than LaFollette while a member of congress. This antipathy finds its explanation largely in the natural resistance of an older order to a new, the natural jealousies of age at the aspirations and reforming tendencies of youth. The vision of the veteran became more and more retrospective as the great episode in his life receded, and he sometimes forgot that this was now an episode of the past and its issues no longer important factors in the shaping of the future, in short that the world was going forward. Up to the closing years of the last century the old soldier vote was the big element to which the republican party made appeal. When finally this dwindling element lost its great importance as a voting asset shrewd politicians saw the practical wisdom of bidding for the support of the rising generation. The new movement typified by LaFollette turned from the sentimental past to the teeming future and it should

MR. LA FOLLETTE'S STRONGEST CARD.

(Copyright 1911 By John T. McCutcheon)



A Famous LaFollette Cartoon, Chicago Tribune, 1911

occasion no wonder that many who had worn the blue found it difficult to reverse their mental processes.

Also the *Milwaukee Sentinel* criticized the governor for not attending the Norwegian celebration at Eau Claire, May 17, although it had frequently charged him with demagogic attempts to strengthen himself with the nationality.

In the meantime organization by both sides was going

rapidly forward and sharp caucous battles were beginning in the counties. The stalwart league was particularly active from its Milwaukee headquarters.

But a shrewd tactical move conceived by LaFollette and utterly unexpected by the opposition was to make the physical position of the league of little strategic value. This was the taking of the state convention away from Milwaukee. The stalwart headquarters were in Milwaukee; they had been established there at great expense; there was to be the battlefield of the campaign; there were massed all the interests and all the influences opposed to LaFollette; all the plans and thoughts of the opposition leaders revolved in blissful serenity around the idea that things were fixed there. When therefore a story appeared in the newspapers of April 22 that the state central committee was considering holding the state convention in Madison the stalwart press raised indignant protest.

Ever since 1884 the state conventions had been held at Milwaukee, but remembering the questionable practices that had characterized many of them and his own disastrous experience in 1896, LaFollette resolved when he had a state central committee of his own mind to remove the convention from the corrupting atmosphere of a great city to a place where the delegates could the more freely represent the wishes of the people and be less beset by temptations and the harassings of unprincipled agents. It was a political stroke worthy the genius and audacity of LaFollette and when first announced created consternation in the ranks of the old wheelhorses of the party, who were accustomed to doing things in the Milwaukee way. Why, it was an affront to the big men of the party and a reflection on their methods, they declared. The convention belonged to Milwaukee by every right of usage and precedent. Milwaukee was the recognized political capital of the state:

here lived most of the "big fellows" who had grown gray in its service. It was the only place where the delegates could be fittingly entertained and given a good time. Why change the old order of things and trundle the whole machinery over to Madison? It was a sinister scheme of the governor's, they declared, to keep the convention more easily in hand for his own manipulation and to entrench himself the more securely. Candor compels the admission that there was no doubt about this, but the higher moral ground on which the governor urged the change—the greater safeguarding of the delegates from the corrupting influences, open and insidious, of a great city—could not be assailed and this argument outweighed the charge of self-seeking. So the scene was transferred from the environment of palm gardens and tinkling cut glass to the pure atmosphere and classic shades of a university.

Nevertheless, when the state central committee voted on May 20 to hold the convention in Madison, the *Milwaukee Sentinel* pronounced it a "colossal blunder." The convention opened at the university gymnasium July 16. Some idea of the importance the press attached to it may be formed from the fact that the *Milwaukee Sentinel* transferred its headquarters and practically its entire editorial force, bag and baggage, to Madison. Not only did Charles Pfister, its owner, and his business manager come, but M. C. Douglas, the managing editor; John Poppendieck, city editor; Gil. Vandercook and Sumner Curtis, special writers; and several other reporters, a staff of artists and photographers, a brigade of uniformed messengers and newsboys and a brass band of twenty pieces. This was the time when under its new millionaire management the *Sentinel* was pouring out money like water to advertise itself and stem the tide of loss in subscriptions and prestige it was experiencing through advocating an unpopular cause. Barns,

factory walls, fences, and billboards even to the Rocky Mountains, it is said, blazoned its name and self-vaunted fame in great and lurid capitals. On this occasion special headquarters were engaged at Madison with private telegraphic and telephone equipment for facilitating the handling of the ocean of copy that its industrious staff piled up. Even the heads of the stories were written in Madison and telephoned to Milwaukee. While this was on, uniformed newsies of stentorian lung cried up the startled town, the band paraded the streets or gave concerts from a stand of its own erected in the capitol park and a force of other employes kept sending up kites over the city and lakes advertising the paper. Altogether it was the most remarkable bit of newspaper enterprise ever attempted in the state. One injunction only was impressed upon the reporters by Managing Editor Douglas—"Don't knock LaFollette or the city of Madison while we are there."

It was a stirring and memorable convention with Levi H. Baneroff of Richland Center acting as permanent chairman. Fiery speeches were features of the occasion. Completely overwhelmed in the matter of delegates, the stalwarts abandoned everything else in a supreme effort to get an unqualified endorsement for Spooner. Compelled to meet the Spooner issue, the administration accepted a tribute to the distinguished senator and then added an amendment expressing the hope that he would find his way clear to share the views of the party, in the event of which none should be more highly honored. The platform committee even "rubbed it in," as was said at the time, by referring to Spooner's "announced determination" not to serve the state again in the senate. This plank proved gall and wormwood to the stalwarts and in the heat of the controversy helped to alienate many well-meaning voters hitherto friendly to the administration. But it was deemed imperative,

in view of past history. In a letter published August 31 that year Governor LaFollette said, referring to the fight everywhere made on him in the name of Spooner, and the defeat of his legislation through the activity of Spooner appointees:

For these reasons the overwhelming majority of the convention felt that if the United States senatorship were in any way made part of the platform, it must be so done as not to be subject to the construction that it was an approval of what had been attempted and accomplished in the name of a United States senator.

Another embarrassing situation was narrowly averted at the convention in connection with the so-called scandal involving the state central committee and the independent book companies. It had come to the ears of former Speaker George A. Buckstaff of Oshkosh that a sum of \$2,000 had been contributed to the state central committee by independent book companies on condition that L. D. Harvey, superintendent of public instruction, should not again be made a candidate. Harvey was stalwart in sympathy, was serving his second term and was slated by the administration leaders for retirement. However, the stalwarts continued him in the field. He was charged by the independent companies with having been over-friendly to the book trust and the independent companies were active in opposing him.

It was reported to the administration leaders that Buckstaff was going to urge the renomination of Harvey at the convention and to flaunt to the world his alleged discovery of the use of money to defeat him.

Accordingly, it was arranged that when Rock county should be announced in the roll call L. E. Gettle of that county should place in nomination Charles P. Cary of Delavan and thus forestall Buckstaff, as Winnebago county would not be reached in the roll call until later.

Gettle was told by Henry F. Coehms and others to "make it strong" and to assert that a conspiracy was on foot to beat Cary and to blacken his character by un-

justly connecting him with the book money charges. Gettle had the voice of a Bashan bull, and roared accordingly, to permit such figure, and the convention gave him such vociferous pre-arranged applause that when Buckstaff's turn came he did not dare, or did not choose, to make the charges he was supposed to be treasuring up.

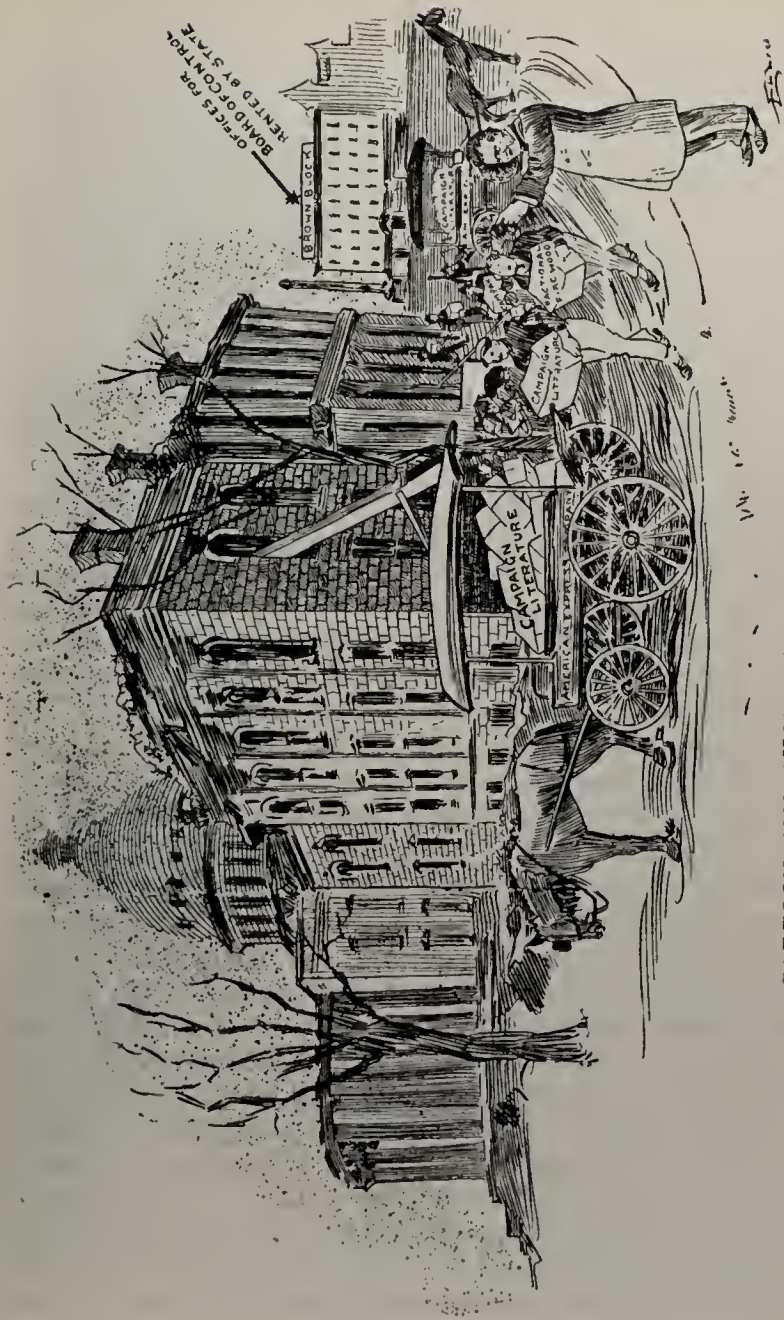
In the meantime another interesting byplay was in progress. It was felt that to beat Harvey it would be necessary to concentrate the administration vote. There were two candidates supported by the administration delegates, Mr. Cary and O. J. Schuster. While events were hurrying toward a vote Henry F. Coehems, entirely on his own responsibility, rushed over to Schuster and dragging the latter behind one of the arches of the gymnasium said:

"You must release your delegates; we can't afford to divide our strength. And you must do it right now. We'll take care of you afterwards."

Schuster gave the word and Cary was nominated.

There were also lighter features to relieve the situation. Former Governor W. D. Hoard was the only LaFollette delegate from Jefferson county and when this county was called on for nomination, he rose and said: "On behalf of the one LaFollette delegate from Jefferson county, I desire to second his renomination." Also when E. L. Philipp of Milwaukee, who had fought LaFollette hard, was named by Chairman Baneroft on the committee to notify Governor LaFollette of his renomination, there was a general laugh. Philipp reddened and began perspiring violently, whereupon a neighboring delegate fanned him vigorously with a *Sentinel* "keep-cool" palm-leaf until it was time for him to go and find the governor.

Governor LaFollette's name was presented to the convention by his friend, H. W. Chynoweth, of Madison. He was renominated on the first ballot by a vote of



CARTOON, 1902, SHOWING OLD STATE CAPITOL

790 to 266 for Whitehead. Edward Scofield received five votes and W. H. Froehlich three. The other nominees on the ticket were: For lieutenant governor, James O. Davidson; secretary of state, Walter L. Houser; treasurer, John J. Kempf; attorney general, L. M. Sturdevant; superintendent of public instruction, Charles P. Cary; railroad commissioner, John W. Thomas; commissioner of insurance, Zeno M. Host.

The platform denounced the federal office-holding lobby and called for the enactment of the bills defeated in the last session of the legislature. A reminder of broken pledges was given the stalwart league legislators in the cold, brief sentence, "We adopt the last republican state platform and reaffirm its principles."

When Governor LaFollette accompanied by the committee on notification pressed through the throng of newspaper men at the front and mounted the platform to accept the nomination, a memorable scene was presented. In the sweltering heat a large number of the delegates and spectators had doffed their coats and had further resorted to fans to keep cool. Many had rolled up their sleeves and thrown open their shirt fronts.

On the appearance of the governor a tremendous shout went up, with thousands of coats, hats, fans and newspapers flying through the air, while hundreds of spectators climbed upon their chairs and gave vent to their feelings in prolonged cheers. As for LaFollette, it was the greatest moment of triumph, so far, in his stormy career. No other contest had approached this one in intensity, none called for greater resolution or more heroic leadership. Not only had he been forced to face the powerful party rebellion set in motion by the Republican League, but likewise the cleverly-projected issue over Spooner, then so powerful a name with which to conjure. But he had risen unfalteringly to the occasion. He had stood uncompromisingly for his principles and

victory had crowned his courage. This was his supreme moment.

Now as he appeared upon the platform there was an aspect of resolution akin to fierceness in his look. His face seemed pale and care-drawn. He satisfied the conception of the dictator come panting from the final blow in the field. Beginning in a cold and measured voice, he soon shifted to the varied stops of the accomplished orator and spoke with masterly effect and inspiration till the veins on his neck and brow stood out like whipcords. Yet there was no word or note of revenge in his address. On the contrary, he said in closing:

Gentlemen, the contest through which we have just passed strengthens the pillars of government by the people and for the people. It teaches the sacredness of public obligation. It elevates moral standards in public life.

These are lessons which we should cherish. Let all else of this contest be forgotten. It does not signify who began it or why it was begun. It has been decided. Let that suffice. I do not treasure one personal injury nor lodge in memory one personal insult. With individuals I have no quarrel and will have none. The span of my life is too short for that. But so much as it pleases God to spare unto me I shall give, whether in public service or out of it, to the contest for good government.

Then as he concluded there was the touching human descent as stepping back amid the tumult he kissed his daughter, patted his little sons on the head and took the hand of his wife.

The pitiful lack of leadership in the stalwart ranks as contrasted with the administration organization and as exemplified in the outcome of this convention led to the following editorial observation by the *Wisconsin State Journal*:

NEW ERA IN WISCONSIN POLITICS.

A new era in Wisconsin politics is here. The men in town today—young, earnest, enthusiastic—are the material about which the party of the future is to rally. It would be useless to impeach them. They have been made fools of in the matter of Spooner;

but these men are here in the party to stay and learn. Sawyer is dead; Harshaw is a physical wreck. Judge Keyes is in the cab, but his hand is no longer on the throttle. Cham Ingersoll's step is less brisk. Mr. Pfister is not old, but he is no leader of party—an auditor only. General Winkler is the grand, old man, when youth is calm to listen. Spooner is a versatile intellect, but no more capable of managing a party than is the expert on Sinaitic manuscripts in the British museum. Jones of Waukesha is a useful man, but he has passed the deadline of constructive party work. In every city and town are a few old fellows who "don't like the looks of things," and will take you by the button-hole and tell you of the civil war. The procession has moved on and they don't know it. The republican party of Wisconsin as it is and is to be is in town today. Old things have passed away. It is useless to talk of a party to oppose them. You could call such a conference, but the company could pass itself off for an old settlers' reunion. The youth, the hope, the future, are in town today. They have renominated LaFollette. They are "it."

Continuing, the paper said solemnly:

The *State Journal* will support the ticket, but give unfolding events the close watch made imperative by LaFollette's slaughter of Spooner. God save the commonwealth of Wisconsin!

CHAPTER XV

Reactionary Policy of Democrats.

CONVENTION DOMINATED BY CORPORATION INFLUENCES—DAVE ROSE NOMINATED—BRYAN DENOUNCES PARTY STATE PLATFORM—BRYAN'S FURTHER ATTITUDE TOWARD WISCONSIN REFORM MOVEMENT—MANY LEADING DEMOCRATS SILENT—LAFOLLETTE MAKES GREAT OPENING SPEECH AT MILWAUKEE—STIRRING CAMPAIGN OF MANY INCIDENTS—LAFOLLETTE MEETS SPOONER ISSUE—LAFOLLETTE RE-ELECTED—DEMOCRATIC DEFECTION ESTIMATED AT 30,000.

REMARKABLE as was the republican convention of that year, that of the democratic party was no less striking from another point of view. It was to prove one of humiliating memory.

Never had there been exhibited in a convention of the party a greater lack of high leadership; never a more pathetic lack of vision as to issues. In spite of the fact that in previous campaigns the party had declared for primary elections, and more equitable taxation of the properties of railroads and other corporations, it now yielded completely to the corporations and put forth a blundering and reactionary declaration of principles. It is true that LaFollette had appropriated all the issues upon which reasonable appeal could be made, but instead of affirming the same principles the democrats with something of their old-time party stupidity took an opposing and weaker position, pronouncing the primary principle, for instance, "un-American and undemocratic."

It was appropriate that heading the ticket nominated on this platform should be Mayor Dave Rose of Milwaukee, he of the dictum, "this dying for principle is all — rot."

Held in Milwaukee September 3, the convention was completely dominated by the so-called "city hall gang"

of the metropolis, largely composed of mere tools of the privilege-seeking corporations, whose representatives from all parties swarmed about the hall.

It was a matter of wonder to many how this bi-partisan body was held together, and managed by Rose, but it was not so remarkable in view of the hold Rose had upon the city electorate, as shown by his repeated elections as mayor. He exercised a peculiar influence over his townspeople, to whom he appeared as guide, philosopher and friend. Once a girl from the country was told by her landlady that she had committed an error in going into a certain "palm garden" one evening.

"Why," she replied in naive astonishment, "I saw Mayor Rose and a lot of women in there."

At the time of the Bigelow bank embezzlement a great and embarrassing run on the bank was threatened. All night long people gathered in front of the building and morning found a clamorous mob, composed largely of laboring people of many nationalities, stretching for blocks away waiting to swoop upon the bank and withdraw their slender deposits as soon as the doors should be opened. The mayor was called upon to see what he could do to reassure the panicky depositors. With his imposing front he appeared before them.

"Citizens of Milwaukee," he said impressively, "you all know Dave Rose" (Cheers). "Every cent that I have is in this bank, and if I had any more money, I'd put it in there."

It was enough. The anxious toilers who had stood all night in the street went back empty-handed to their humble homes.

The democratic platform created a sensation throughout the country. William J. Bryan, in an editorial in *The Commoner*, denounced the convention body as "a set of blunderers and political cowards."

"The democrats," he said, "instead of standing by him (LaFollette) when he was right and appealing to the country on the national issues, in which he is wrong, adopted the short-sighted policy of trying to conciliate that element of the republican party which can never be democratic. To denounce a primary law as "un-American and un-democratic" is to betray an ignorance of what democracy really is," etc.

LaFollette said later of this convention: "The corporations having failed to control the republican convention were given the control of the opposing convention without contest. The platform adopted in that convention was the joint work of the corporation elements of both political parties. The republican bosses, repudiated by the republican state convention, refused to recognize the republican platform and gave their support to the opposition, while thousands of democrats openly supported the principles in the republican convention."

Also in his great opening speech in Milwaukee September 30 that year he pictured a phase of the proceedings in these graphic words:

But, mark you, the convention which assembled in Milwaukee on the third day of this month adopted a platform which contained no hint or suggestion or criticism of that republican legislature for violating its promise to make railroads and other public-service corporations pay their just share of the taxes!

Marvelous spectacle indeed! In a state convention the most important legislative proceeding in a generation of time—legislative action which had saved the railroads more than a million dollars a year at the expense of the other taxpayers of the state—is barred from all mention by an impenetrable wall of silence.

Was not that a very strange proceeding for a political convention? Can a similar instance be found in all the political history of the entire country? It is quite apparent that someone sought to have incorporated in that platform a condemnation of the legislature for not passing the railroad and other corporation tax bills. It is equally plain that the influences which were protecting corporation interests in that convention compelled it to

perform hari-kari with the resolution as originally drawn. It was, as anyone can see by consulting the seventh resolution of that platform, written in the beginning (omitting the preliminary introductory words) as follows:

"During the two years of control of the legislative machinery no effective steps have been taken for the establishment of a system of equal taxation."

But it would not do to leave it in that form. That would stand as a criticism of the men in the legislature who had helped kill the railroad tax bills. That must be changed. They had agreed to "be quiet about the legislature, and abuse the governor." Both objects could be attained by just writing in after the word "taken" the words "by the governor," so that the resolution when amended would read as follows:

"During the two years of control of the legislative machinery no effective steps have been taken by the governor for the establishment of a system of equal taxation."

In this way it could be adopted without criticising the legislature for defeating railroad taxation.

This convention is entitled to great credit and originality for its discovery that the governor at any time "had control of the legislative machinery."

What a revelation these lines of the platform make! They tell the whole story. They force the question home to every man who reflects: "Was that an old-time democratic convention, facing its political rival, quick to see and point out any mistake, any wrong-doing?"

For eighteen months the democratic press of the state had sounded a ringing note of rebuke to the legislature which had failed to keep its promises, and when there comes the day and the hour for the crystallization of all this criticism in a political platform, proclaiming from the housetop that broken pledge, the bad faith of that legislature—then, then, when the democratic ear is strained to catch the party slogan, this Milwaukee convention for some peculiar reason is as silent as the house of the dead.

What does it mean? What is its real significance? This omission, this silence, "cries trumpet-tongued to heaven" for explanation. Here was an opportunity that would not occur again in the average lifetime of a democrat, for—disciplined as it has been by that experience—the republican party of Wisconsin will never again break its platform promises. Here was a chance such as would have opened the eyes of a democrat, dead in his grave. And yet not a word, not a whisper about it, in all the platform declarations of that convention. That speaking silence which con-

fesses, which proclaims to all the world, that the controlling force in the convention was in full membership and sympathy with the legislative action defeating railroad taxation, will, before this campaign is over, open the eyes of every living democrat in the state.

This question will force itself upon every member of that party; it will come demanding an answer every time he remembers the defeat of the railroad taxation bills, which that silence plainly approves: Was that a real old-fashioned democratic convention, or was it a corporation convention for defaming the character of men who will not bend and cannot be broken by all the mighty power it represented? Democrats will remember that there were many honored members of their party in that convention, but they will not forget that those democrats did not write its platforms nor control in nominating its ticket.

LaFollette's implied prophecy was vindicated by the results of the campaign. Many high-minded democratic leaders refused to endorse the platform or take the field. In the course of the campaign the republican state central committee issued a circular at the head of which was printed the names of J. L. O'Connor, Louis G. Bomrich, P. H. Martin, A. J. Schmitz, F. Wm. Cotzhausen, W. H. Rogers, and asking, "Why Are These Big Guns of Democracy Silent in This Campaign? The Answer Suggests Itself."

Rose made a vigorous canvass and employed for the purpose a special train which came to be appropriately known as the "Whoop-la-Special." He was warmly received by the stalwarts and at many places where he spoke he was presented with bouquets of roses, with the statement that each rose represented some republican in the place who had come over to his support. It is said that on such occasions, the candidate, through a pre-arranged signal, would take a drink of water, make two taps with the glass, whereupon some young lady would step forward with the bouquet.

It is interesting to here note Bryan's further attitude toward Wisconsin in this campaign. Not only was he

prompt and unsparing in his denunciation of the democratic platform adopted, but he refused absolutely to enter the state lest such action might be misinterpreted as giving some semblance of sanction to it. Governor LaFollette himself made public this interesting fact some years later in a speech, saying:

I happened to be out at Lincoln, Neb., attending a Chautauqua meeting and while in my room at the hotel a knock came at my door. I did not even know that Bryan was in Lincoln at that time—he is traveling around the country most of the time. I said “Come in” and William Jennings Bryan walked into my room. He stayed about five minutes, but he stayed long enough to say to me at that time: “LaFollette, you have got a big fight on; you are doing the best work in Wisconsin that is being done anywhere in this country for popular government. You are doing the best thing in Wisconsin that is being done anywhere against the great evil, and you are losing a part of the republican support that you ought to have. I believe that that movement is worth so much to the people of this country that I want you to get all the support that you can get out of the democratic party, and I shall not cross the line of Wisconsin to make a political speech in that state to solidify the democratic party against you. More than that I will give you support for those movements and for those important pieces of legislation.” And he did. I say to you tonight that William Jennings Bryan never came into Wisconsin in 1902 to make a political speech in that campaign, and he did not come into Wisconsin in 1904 to make a political speech, although this was a presidential year, for the reason that he wanted the democrats of this state to help us in that great movement. I tell you, my friends, the man who is as much bigger than his party, as this indicates Bryan is, is something more than a politician; he is a patriot; he is a great leader; he stands out here seeing clearly this great evil.

Perhaps nothing in the whole course of Bryan's career has more markedly stamped the bigness of the man, his patriotism and sincerity, than this refusal to lend the slightest semblance of aid to the discrediting of LaFollette and his work, for here was no blare of trumpets over the taking of a position, no advertising, but the sacrifice of silence, itself susceptible of disadvantageous miscon-

struction. Historical completeness demands a still further observation and digression. Bryan later did more than present a mere neutral arm toward the Wisconsin cause. When in the legislative session of 1905 the railroad commission bill was hanging in the balance he chanced to be on a lecturing tour in Wisconsin. One day a telephone call for the governor came into the executive office.

"This is Bryan," said the voice at the other end, "how are you getting on with your legislation?"

"The best railroad bill in the country is in danger of defeat," replied LaFollette.

"Can I be of any service to you?" asked Bryan.

"You can be of the greatest service if you can come down here and line up the democratic members for it," answered LaFollette.

"Well, I shall be in Milwaukee tomorrow morning and shall be glad to come over to Madison and speak to the members of the legislature for it," said Bryan.

The next day a joint meeting of the two houses of the legislature was held and Bryan made a powerful plea to all members to rise above party and faction for the common good by the enactment of progressive legislation, saying:

I believe that the best thing for every democrat to do is to advocate what he believes to be right whether he advocates it alone or in company with those of another political party. And I believe it is good for the republicans to act upon the same principle. I have no patience whatever with the short-sighted partisan policy, that if you can't get a thing through your party you must keep the country from getting it until your party gives it. The best evidence a man can give of his sincerity is to help secure a thing when somebody else will get the benefit or the credit for it instead of himself or his party, and I don't believe that any man can hurt his party permanently by putting the good of his country above the good of his party as it may appear from time to time. I am glad, therefore, that your governor has taken the position that he has on the questions that are now dividing the country.

For the subsequent passage of the railway commission bill and the rehabilitated public service in Wisconsin a share of credit is therefore due the great Nebraska patriot.

The campaign which closed on the night of November 4 that year was one of the sharpest and most spectacular in the history of the state. In some respects it was unparalleled. Many of the giants of all parties and factions were drawn into the contest. Governor LaFollette, Mayor Rose, Senator Spooner, former Senator Vilas and Neal Brown were among the stars of the hustings. The political meetings were marked by many dramatic incidents and much asking of questions on the part of the voters.

While nominally a contest between the republican and democratic parties it was more than that. It was a contest between the people and the corporations. This fact was exemplified not only in the progressive republican and the reactionary democratic platforms, but in the leading candidates themselves, LaFollette, the unflagging crusader against privilege, and Rose, the friend and servant of the great public service corporations of Milwaukee.

The democratic machinery having been taken over completely by the great corporate interests opposed to reform, the friends and beneficiaries of privilege of all parties accordingly sought the democratic camp for solace and companionship, while thousands of justice-loving democrats secretly prepared to vote a party rebuke. Independence in politics not being as fashionable then as now, the unique spectacle was presented of numerous men on both sides contributing to their party campaign funds to save the appearance of regularity, and then taking the field with long knives against their own party tickets.

The demand for speeches by the governor in the summer of 1902 was something enormous. For instance, he had over 300 invitations for a Fourth of July address. He finally accepted one from his old home neighbors and spoke at a celebration held on top of Blue Mounds, in southwestern Dane county.

In this stirring campaign Governor LaFollette made fifty-five speeches, opening at the West Side Turn hall in Milwaukee September 30 and resuming for the remainder of the campaign on October 7. Sometimes he made five speeches a day, and the first two days he was out he drove seventy miles overland. Remembering his illness of the previous year, his friends were greatly concerned over the state of his health and actually feared that he would not be able to conclude his opening speech at Milwaukee, but he was in better condition than they suspected. He had spent many weeks at health resorts and in visiting relatives and had thus built up his strength. As in his brief round of the fall before, Mrs. LaFollette accompanied him throughout this campaign, keeping close watch of his health. Throughout the entire campaign he completely ignored his opponent, Rose, never once mentioning him. The latter had sought at various times to draw the governor's fire and announced that he wanted a joint debate with LaFollette on the question of the Milwaukee franchises, but received no notice. Rose, on the other hand, made a vicious campaign of personalities and accusations.

These opposing candidates themselves furnished a picturesque element of the campaign in the contrasts they afforded. LaFollette was small of stature, while Rose had a physique of remarkable proportions. He was not only a giant, but a handsome one, and in the flower of physical strength and perfection. He presented a most commanding and impressive appearance, both on the platform and in meeting with men. LaFollette was

still dieting while, needless to say, Rose was not. It was said after the campaign that the little fellow who lived on bread and milk had knocked out the giant who could eat four square meals a day.

But though King Saul was very tall
And never king was taller,
It was not all to be so tall
For better kings are smaller.

For all his size he was not wise,
Nor was he long annointed
Ere people said with shaking head—
“We’re sadly disappointed.”

When LaFollette opened his campaign with a powerful speech at Milwaukee September 30—one of the greatest he ever made—his opponent had already been in the field a month. LaFollette was ill at the time and it was a serious question with his friends if he would be able to make the speech, but he succeeded in doing so. In this speech, which had been awaited with national interest, he took a firm stand for the taxation of corporations as other property, warning them not to attempt their threat to “take it out of the people,” and that the state had the sovereign right of regulation.

* * *

In connection with LaFollette's campaign there were many interesting incidents. An amusing one occurred at Lancaster shortly after the opening of the campaign. The governor was dwelling on the interminable demands of the old system of choosing candidates and delegates; how town caucuses had to be held to elect delegates to the county convention, to elect delegates to the state convention, to in turn elect delegates to the national convention, etc.; and how there had to be other caucuses to elect delegates to the county convention to nominate candidates for the county offices, and still other caucuses

to elect delegates to assembly, senatorial and congressional conventions, and so on, and so on.

"Now," he shouted dramatically, "If there is any man in this audience who has attended all the caucuses and conventions in this county this year I wish he would stand up so I can see what he looks like."

To the governor's astonishment a lank individual at the rear of the hall unwound himself and rose up, while an ill-subdued titter gradually spread over the audience. This broke into open hilarity as the governor remarked, "Well, my friend, you must have had lots of time on your hands." The governor did not know the significance of the mirth of his hearers until after his speech, when he learned that the citizen who had shown such patriotic interest in local public affairs was one of his own game wardens. So much was made of the incident by the opposition that to take the wind out of it LaFollette told the story on himself at many of the meetings that followed.

The persistent charge of the opposition that the independent book companies had contributed \$2,000 to the republican campaign fund on condition that State Superintendent L. D. Harvey was to be sacrificed by being denied a renomination, called for a reply from the governor. The opposition press in both parties harped continuously on this subject and in all cartoons this alleged deal was suggested. The opportunity for the governor to reply came at Mineral Point, October 10, in response to a question by a friend, possibly pre-arranged. The governor said:

It would answer the purpose of those who prefer to be silent on railroad taxation to confine public attention for the next four weeks to the independent book companies or any other subject.
. . . I had absolutely no knowledge or information, either directly or indirectly, that Mr. Kroushage or any other man proposed to contribute, or had contributed, for campaign expenses any money received from an independent book company, or any other

book company, from any copartnership or corporation, either directly or through any individual acting for them, or either of them.

From an investigation that I made after the charges were brought to my attention, I state emphatically that not one dollar received from any source whatever by any one connected with the conduct of the campaign at Madison was received upon any condition that any individual should be nominated or defeated upon the state ticket or that any officer should then or thereafter show any favor or consideration to the contributor, or any one else for the contributor. No such proposition was ever made by any one or hinted at in any manner. Had any such contribution ever been offered, from any source whatever, it would have been promptly refused by those who were conducting the campaign. Those are the facts.

Following this plain statement from the governor much less was made of the charge during the remainder of the campaign. However, Governor LaFollette's denial led to the declaration from the stump by Neal Brown, the democratic philosopher, that the governor's profession of ignorance was like unto the course of the priest in the holy place, who left the sanctuary so that on returning he might not know whence came the gifts that hung on the horns of the altar.

For the meeting at Elkhorn, the seat of the stalwart stronghold of Walworth county, October 15, the governor's friends determined to give him a reception to show him he had warm friends there as well. Accordingly, on his arrival, he found a big parade arranged for him. This was led by one George Wylie, a popular character 76 years old, who rode a horse, both animal and rider being gaily decorated. The streets through which the parade passed were turned into lanes of red, white and blue.

At Fox Lake, a couple of days later, LaFollette performed the unusual and highly interesting act of calling the local candidate for the legislature to the front with him and declaring that such candidate had promised to stand by the party platform. The dissatisfaction of the

Bryan democrats over their party platform here cropped out as one Bill Stoddard, a well known character, called out in meeting, "I am a Bryan democrat, but you are all right."

At LaCrosse, October 20, LaFollette spoke a good word for "Long" Jones of Waukesha, who was a candidate for re-election but was doomed to be defeated. Jones had declared:

I shall, if re-elected to the state senate, vote for the primary election bill and assist by voice and vote, to the best of my ability, in carrying out that principle by enacting that bill into law.

Of this Governor LaFollette said at LaCrosse:

With commendable frankness Jones does not claim that his individual feeling has changed as to the principle, but he recognizes that as a republican candidate he should be in accord with the republican platform and represent the majority sentiment of his constituency.

This incident and the warfare in the republican party furnished the democrats much matter for pleasantries and ridicule. Said Neal Brown at a democratic meeting October 27:

The republicans are bound to have harmony if they have to fight for it. What is the name of that man out here where they drink water, I forget?

A voice—"Long Jones of Waukesha."

That's the man. I shall never forget the scene when Long Jones and short Bob fell on each others' necks. It reminded me of the old adage that a man must eat a peck of dirt in his lifetime, but I did not think that a man was under the necessity of eating the whole peck at one time.

* * *

It was inevitable that the Spooner issue should come to an acute pass, to a "showdown" as it were, on the part of the LaFollette side and this occurred at Appleton.

Never was there a sharper test of LaFollette's courage made and never did it ring truer or more prompt than on this occasion.

The governor had just concluded his speech and was acknowledging the applause when a local justice of the peace, Fred Heineman, arose and put this question to him:

Governor, in view of the brilliant record made by Senator Spooner, to which you have so eloquently referred, and in view of the splendid campaign he is making for the entire state ticket, are you in favor of the unconditional re-election of John C. Spooner to the United States senate?

"A silence like unto that in one of the tombs of the Pharaohs fell upon the assemblage," wrote a correspondent who was present, "and was broken by the governor as follows:"

I will answer you in this way, sir. I am for the success and for the principles of the republican party as laid down, and the day and the hour that Senator Spooner raises his voice for the principles of the republican party, as laid down in the state platform, I will raise my voice for his re-election to the United States senate, because I then can do so in conformity with the platform of my party.

This daring and unequivocal reply was followed by another moment of deep silence. The audience lingered, and dismay was plainly visible on the faces of many of his friends. The tension was broken when one, J. H. Harbeck, stepped to the front and said:

I propose three cheers for the brave answer our governor has given to that question.

These were given and the audience broke up, many with dire misgivings at this sharpening of the issue between these two men.

From ocean to ocean the incident was taken up in the press because of the prominence of Spooner in public life. It was generally believed that LaFollette would lose from 20,000 to 30,000 republican votes as a consequence and that it probably would mean his defeat.

Even General Bryant, chairman of the state central committee, with the reputation of being the best political

diagnostician in the state, believed that LaFollette had committed a fatal error and closing up his office in Milwaukee he returned to Madison, declaring the campaign was as good as over and LaFollette defeated. Not accustomed to looking outside of party lines for support, he could not see that thousands of Bryan democrats, mutinous over the reactionary platform of their party, were preparing to come over to the support of the fearless champion of popular rights. Many whose instincts were rather toward manipulation could not see the psychological effect of a strong stroke and appeal. Governor LaFollette intuitively saw this and like a political fatalist unknown to fear, as it were, went serenely on with his campaign confident of ultimate success.

This Appleton action was, however, nothing remarkable in LaFollette for in the more precarious year of 1904 he said in his speech at LaCrosse that the stalwarts could do him no greater service than voting against him.

The meeting at Oshkosh, Senator Sawyer's old home, held October 29, was a notable local affair, presided over by Attorney General E. R. Hicks, who two years later was to be found fighting LaFollette. Hundreds of people were unable to gain admission to the hall. The asperities of political warfare were softened on this occasion by a song, the tribute of a local genius, one stanza of which ran :

Vote right, vote right, my boys, our cause is just and grand;
We're hoping many glorious things for this, our native land.
Wisconsin's son, Wisconsin's pride, tonight we all are for;
The leader in the people's cause is our brave governor.

The governor spoke from a roped platform on which various local events had recently been held, and started a laugh by a reference to "missing the rope" as at one time he nearly fell over it. At Manitowoc the following night he declared: "The eyes of the United States tonight are on Wisconsin. It is not a question as to who shall win, but the question that the people of the whole

country are awaiting the solution of is, whether the corporations or the people here in Wisconsin, where the issue is squarely joined, are to rule."

At Green Bay the crowd arose and sang "America," to a brass band accompaniment, which gave a cue for an appeal by the governor to consider public questions on the heights above partisan politics as "suggested by that grand old melody." Some feeling had been occasioned at this place by the absolute refusal of Senator Hagemaster to rent the Park Pavilion, the largest hall in the city, for this meeting. He had previously let it for a Spooner meeting.

The meeting at Marshfield, October 30, was likewise remarkable, an incident of which was an incipient fire in the hotel where the governor had gone to snatch an hour's sleep before speaking and through the excitement of which he was not awakened. The governor was welcomed with martial music and the town brilliantly illuminated for the occasion at the order of former Governor Upham, head of the electric light company. A special train came from Greenwood with over a hundred voters and a brass band. The armory where the governor spoke was filled long before the hour and an overflow meeting was held at the city hall, addressed by John J. Hannan of Milwaukee. This hall also soon overflowed and rivaled the enthusiasm of the armory when the governor later appeared to speak for fifteen minutes. The meetings were marked by many interruptions of enthusiasm. "Mark your tickets," shouted the governor. "That's what we are going to do," came back the ringing response. Dave Rose, the democratic candidate for governor, in a previous speech had urged the people to ask LaFollette questions, with a view to embarrassing him, and this was attempted by an individual at this meeting; but when the tall city marshal arose from his place in the front seat and glared menacingly across the

hall at the offender the latter subsided. Again toward the close of the governor's address this individual attempted to interrupt, whereupon the marshal once more arose from his seat and glared with the same subsiding effect, recalling the immortal batsman in the line, "one scornful look from Casey and the audience was awed." Such were some of the incidents of an interesting evening.

In the midst of all these crowding events, the governor yet found time for cultivating the amenities of life and to pay an unheralded visit to his birthplace and old farm home in the town of Primrose, Dane county. As a relief from tales of campaign and intrigue an account of this outing, taken in the month of October, may be here reproduced. Under the caption, "With Governor LaFollette to Old Primrose, in Fancé," one of the Madison newspapers of the time contained the following sketch:

WITH GOVERNOR LAFOLLETTE TO OLD PRIMROSE, IN FANCY.

Governor LaFollette returned to Madison a new man Thursday night after his visit to the old LaFollette stamping ground at Primrose where he first saw the light of day in a little log cabin, June 14, 1855. While but a day was spent on the dear familiar ground it was a full day and the most perfect in all the year so far. There is no place this side of Italy where the sun shines mellower than over old Primrose, as the governor felt, and what so suited to a day of reminiscence as a bright autumnal sky! And it was a day rich in surging memories. The executive stood again in hallowed places where in hardy pioneer days his parents and uncles had toiled and suffered. The LaFollettes were numerous, a kindly, sober religious family, revered by their neighbors for their honor, their hospitality and their deeds of kindness in hours of need.

The company that went on the pilgrimage was notable also, not alone from the fact that it included the governor of the state and a judge of the circuit court, but, and chiefly, because there was present one of the pioneer mothers of Primrose, Mrs. Harvey LaFollette of Indiana, a tall, beautiful, gracious woman, widow of one of the LaFollette brothers who came to the town in the days of its first settlement. She had not seen the old Dane county home

in thirty-seven years and it was primarily for her sake that the trip was taken. The party included the families of Governor LaFollette and Judge Siebecker, Mrs. Harvey LaFollette and her daughter, Mrs. Clara LaFollette-Nash of the state of Oregon, and Charles S. LaFollette of Chicago, cousin of the governor, and his wife. They took the 7 o'clock morning train to Belleville over the Illinois Central road and thence drove to the old homestead, a distance of six miles. It was counted exceedingly good fortune that the finest day in the year was struck for the outing. Madison was reached at 9:15 in the evening, so that the whole day was given to pleasure.

The road lay through the rich farming land of Montrose, through the village of Jamestown, containing a blacksmith shop and an orchard, and on past cheese factories into Primrose. The baronial home of Uncle Eli Pederson, state treasury agent, was seen, situated on the summit of a high hill on a farm of 400 acres, one of the richest in Primrose, and the governor pointed out objects of interest here and there. To the northward, but scarce visible, stood Devil's Chimney, a towering shaft of sandstone, 90 feet high, a monument to the forces of erosion that in countless ages past scooped out the valley in which it stands. On the way the old Hanna stone schoolhouse was passed. Here the governor recalled that he had often come for the weekly mail and here he had also been in great demand on every spelling school occasion, not particularly as a champion speller—although he is said to have won a contest in orthography there—but chiefly because of his ability to declaim a popular heroic poem entitled "The Polish Boy." Near by was the old Harvey LaFollette home which was next visited. Here the pioneer mother who had presided over it forty years before led the way to the old spring and filled again a cooling bottle as a memorial of the visit. Henceforward the road was up one steep hill and down another. Grapevines grew in profusion along the old rail fences and there were apparently the same groves of crab apples and wild plums. The governor could not forbear jumping out of the vehicle to gather some plums; he was a boy again. He and his sister and aunt recalled the old Eliphalet ("Life") Thomas place, familiar to the LaFollette children as the home of a dear friend of the family. The path of the great tornado of '78 was also noticed. This disaster occurred the year before the governor was graduated from the university and seven people were killed, two in Primrose. As the party came over the crest of the final hill there lay the dear old

valley, almost unchanged, with the old Postville road, once an Indian trail from the lead mines, and the path of many a farmer's boy later who had to drive sheep over it to Postville. Directly in front where the roads join stood the first house in Primrose, built by Robert Spears in 1844, and across the way from it they saw the old barn, the first frame building in the town, a leaning ruin eloquent in memories of the past. The old spring which determined the location of the cabin still babbled across the road though not with its one-time vigor. The spring is the source of a small stream that flows out of the yard and across the road. It has never been bridged and farmers for a generation or more have been wont to stop and water their teams in it and slake their own thirst. It is related with pride by the people roundabout that the renowned violinist, Ole Bull, once stopped to drink there while on his way to visit the Norwegian settlement in Perry. Less than a dozen steps brought the reverent visitors to the old frame school-house, unchanged after all the years, where the governor and Mrs. Siebecker had attended as toddlers, and then but another step down the road there broke on their view the old dear homestead with its flood of sacred associations.

The little valley, with its steep, narrow hillsides that once shut in the ambitions that now compass the entire state, looked greener than it has in a score of years past and was not unlike that which the future governor trod in barefoot days. The searching feet of change have not often found their way up its narrow, crooked roads and the rainy season this year had produced as lusty a crop of burdocks, hemp and mullein as flourished in the old days in the pigpen and calf pasture on the flat beside the little trickling stream. But as the governor cast his eyes up the western hillside back of the old home, he missed the groves of wild crab apples and wild plums which were such a delight in his boyhood. The old trees were gone, but other similar clumps were noticed elsewhere, so he was not entirely unconsoled at their loss.

Christ Englund, the Norwegian who now owns the celebrated farm, had not been notified of the coming of his distinguished guests and so was greatly astonished when the carriages drove up and the genial governor, who never forgets a name or a face, waved his hand and called out familiarly:

“Hello! Chris, how are you, old boy?”

The happy executive who had left far behind the vexing cares of politics and state to step once more on his native heath, bounded out of the vehicle and gave the farmer such a handgrip as the lat-

ter had not felt since he last called on Bob in Madison. Gradually speech returned to the astonished farmer and when the nature of the visit was made known he welcomed the party and said he would kill the fatted calf in a trice if they could wait a few minutes. The fatted calf in this instance was, so to speak, a number of wild-eyed turkeys that were picking their stilted way through the smartweed near at hand. But while the governor doubtless felt some of the twinges of the returning prodigal he waved his friend off, saying he would not for the world put him to any trouble; that they had brought their own lunch and that they would eat it under the shadow of the old elder bushes beside the calf pasture. The ladies might go in the house for a visit if they cared, while the men folks would look over the place a little. The governor inquired eagerly for the old log cabin, now gone, the old barn, part of which was still standing, the condition of the crops, etc., and noted some minor changes that had occurred.

After inquiring about the neighbors the governor pushed aside the weeds and grass to take a look at the little stream that flowed past the old cabin door, but found that the dry seasons of recent years had swallowed it up. Regretfully he walked over to what remained of the old frame house that was annexed to his cabin home and recalled many incidents of mischievous childhood. Here he had made cider and applejack, here brought home great bags of crab apples, walnuts and hazelnuts, and here grown watermelons—Oh! how sweet and cool—and sunflowers and morning glories. He rejoiced that the day should be one of almost supernal beauty. It was as if heaven smiled upon his visit to the old haunts and had sent the dispensation of old-time mellow sunshine, which more than anything else recalled his happy, innocent days of early life. Mrs. Siebecker smiled at the many incidents recalled and added her quota of girlhood pioneer experiences, while the venerable aunt told of quilting parties and husking bees, as well as many sterner memories.

It was a great day for "Bob," Jr., and little Phil. They romped after the calves, clambered over impossible fences, got lost in the tall grass and ate everything green in sight. The governor laughed heartily at their fun and the venerable grand aunt saw in them the Bob of two score years back, while the first lady in the state ruined a gown trying to keep up with the little rovers through the nettles and underbrush. The exercise, she admitted, beat Emily Bishop delarte all hollow and as she caught up all rosy and half out of breath with her daughter a farmer on his way to the Mt. Vernon mill cast a sly, mischievous glance at them as he lounged in his seat and called out familiarly: "Hello! girls!"

The lunch was a great success; farm day appetites lent the keenest relish, and jollity unbounded prevailed. A visit was made to the schoolhouse and the spring and the stroll continued up the road.

After all the returning children had steeped their minds in the merry and melancholy memories called up by the visit a reluctant adieu of the old place was taken and the carriages turned eastward on the return trip.

* * *

At the close of the campaign Governor LaFollette spoke to a great audience of six thousand people at the Exposition building in Milwaukee on the night of November 1. It was an enthusiastic audience, good-humored, and in sympathy with him. In discussing primary elections, the governor said, "Close up your saloons as you do on election day." This remark started a wave of laughter.

"I guess you don't know where you are at, Bob," said a friend. The governor saw the point and smiled: "I have never been in Milwaukee on election day," he said.

On returning to Madison, November 5, Governor and Mrs. LaFollette drove from the station to the voting booth in the fourth ward where they lived, and both voted. The law had been changed to permit women to vote in the election of state and county school superintendents and Mrs. LaFollette was the first woman to vote in her ward.

LaFollette and Rose were to have similar experiences with their home constituencies. LaFollette's previous vote in Dane county of 4,000 plurality was cut to 800 and he also lost the city of Madison by 116, having carried it in 1900 by 900 votes. It was an eloquent demonstration of the stalwart defection. Rose also lost both the city and county of Milwaukee.

While the stalwarts bolted the ticket by tens of thousands at the November election LaFollette was nevertheless returned by a plurality of 47,599, the vote being La-

Follette, republican, 193,417; Rose, democrat, 145,818; Emil Seidel, socialist, 15,970; E. W. Drake, prohibitionist, 9,647; H. E. D. Peck, social labor, 791.

The slump in the total vote in this election from that of 1900 was about 75,000. The democratic loss was about 15,000, the republican about 70,000. The socialist vote was increased about 10,000, presumably drawn equally from the republicans and the democrats. The larger part of this stay-at-home vote, it is safe to say, was republican. However, it is a safe presumption also, in view of the activities of the stalwart league, that thousands of republicans voted the democratic ticket. The fact that the democratic ticket, in spite of this republican support, suffered a loss of 15,000 votes would indicate a substantial democratic defection to LaFollette. In fact, it has been estimated that the number of democrats who came over to LaFollette in this election was 30,000.

The advent of LaFollette was to prove disruptive of practically all political parties in Wisconsin. Previous to his time the antagonisms were chiefly between the old parties and on national lines alone. Since then such animosities have been rather retrospective and fanciful and those entertaining them rightly classed as old-fashioned, whatever their party. Especially in the republican party has the factional division been pronounced, extending into business and professional life, even to this day. The kindling of insurrection in his own party might naturally be expected to redound to the advantage of the opposing democratic party, but such was not to prove true. As Napoleon disarmed a possible menace by keeping the German states divided against one another, so LaFollette put the democratic party of Wisconsin hors de combat for years by diverting a large element of it to his standard. It was never a serious menace to him.

CHAPTER XVI

Sensational Legislative Session of 1903.

THREE SPECIAL MESSAGES OF GOVERNOR ON RAILROAD LEGISLATION—LENROOT ELECTED SPEAKER OF ASSEMBLY—FIGHT FOR PRIMARY ELECTIONS RENEWED—CONGRESSMAN BABCOCK COMES TO DIRECT STALWART FORCES—GOVERNOR VETOES HAGEMEISTER BILL WITH STINGING MESSAGE—PRIMARY BILL WITH REFERENDUM FEATURE FINALLY PASSED—STALWART PLAN TO DEFEAT IT AT POLLS—RAILROAD AD VALOREM BILL PASSED.

WITH three special messages from Governor LaFollette on railroad issues, and desperate struggles over the primary election, ad valorem taxation and railway commission bills, the legislative session of 1903 was probably unparalleled in excitement in the state's history. Sensations were the order of the day throughout almost the entire session.

The temper of the people over the betrayal of pledges by the previous legislature was shown in the fact that the assembly of 1903 presented seventy new faces. The republicans numbered 76, the democrats 24, the administration having a slight majority over the combined democratic and stalwart vote. Among the prominent republicans of the previous session who failed to return were Albert R. Hall of Dunn county, Philo A. Orton of Lafayette county, Henry Overbeek of Sturgeon Bay, L. M. Sturdevant of Neillsville, later attorney general; and George P. Rossman of Ashland. Among those returned were Speaker George H. Ray of LaCrosse, A. H. Dahl of Vernon county, later state treasurer; Henry Johnson of Oconto county, also later state treasurer; W. W. Andrew and I. L. Lenroot of Superior, Roderick C. Ainsworth of Waukesha, David Evans, Jr., of Waukesha, Frank A. Cady of Marshfield, E. W. LeRoy of Marinette

and M. J. Wallrich of Shawano. New members who were to rise to prominence included among others George E. Beedle of Waupaca, later commissioner of insurance; John S. Donald of Dane, later state senator and secretary of state; Herman L. Ekern of Trempealeau, later speaker and commissioner of insurance, and James A. Freear of Hudson, later state senator, secretary of state and member of congress. On the whole the assembly presented a clear-eyed, genuine-looking group of men, apparently full of hopeful determination to legislate in the common interests. Speaking of this body the *State Journal* said:

There was an absence of those boisterous greetings from red-faced politicians and "Hello, Charlie, where the h—l did you come from?" that marked legislative meetings in the old days.

Next to A. R. Hall, perhaps, the most conspicuous member of the assembly who failed to return was Philo A. Orton of Lafayette county. Orton was one of the giants of the assemblies of 1899 and 1901. Deeply versed in the law and with a rare facility and readiness in debate, but with a certain archaic point of view, he seemed to have come up from the legendary past, a survival of the strong man of his section who laid the constitutional foundations of the state.

The ease of Orton suggests an observation in passing. While experience, as a rule, brings added usefulness to men, the reverse is frequently found to be true of legislators. Few indeed are such men who long remain true and disinterested public servants. Only constant vigilance, firmness and clearness of view will prevent their independence and honor from becoming undermined. Self-interest, ever tempting to go up into the mountains, trifles and associations that compromise, or commit one to positions or policies contrary to public interests and one's first good resolutions; security, tending to breed stagnant conservatism and inclination toward the easy course; trading, with its alluring temporary advantages—these and other causes and circumstances eventually

ruin the usefulness of most legislators. Many a member's worth is destroyed in his first term of service. Hence, the constant necessity of returning to the soil, so to speak, for new material. This was particularly true of the legislatures of the LaFollette administrations.

For instance, only six men sat in the assembly through the three legislative sessions of the LaFollette administrations, Roderick C. Ainsworth of Waukesha, W. W. Andrew of Superior, A. H. Dahl of Vernon county, Henry Johnson of Oconto county, Fred Hartung of Milwaukee and I. L. Lenroot of Superior. Throughout all these sessions, by the way, Ainsworth's name was first in all roll calls and this old Roman met the high responsibility of being the first to take a position upon measures and issues with unfailing courage and patriotism. With him it was no case of waiting "for Hugo to vote first."

It may be here further observed, however, that the legislatures of the LaFollette period were remarkable for the strong men they brought out. Like other wars, the conflicts of the time rapidly made men out of boys. Thus observers of the period may remember, for instance, when the youthful Herman L. Ekern left the speaker's chair to take the floor and in a stirring speech remind the members of the flag under which they were sitting, and how later the boyish-looking John J. Blaine on his first day as state senator boldly moved for an investigation of the election expenditures of Isaac Stephenson as United States senator. The constant clash of mind on mind created an atmosphere of hostility and suspense and kept all responsive spirits on the *qui vive*. The challenge of battle was ever in the air, and every mind was on the alert for surprises, for strategy and the seizing of occasions. Out of this stress and turmoil many a mind came forth sharpened and strengthened for future achievement. Hitherto obscure lawyers, country mer-

chants and business men developed into leaders and constructive statesmen whose names will be written high in state history. The embattled farmers of the LaFollette regime were to bring about wholesome changes which the preceding regencies of greater culture and respectability had refused, or seemed unable to effect.

A period of comparative complacency has followed, with legislatures correspondingly less warlike, but the call for sacrifice has been less imperative. The LaFollette episode marked the stressful transition from lobby-bossed legislatures, with attorneys of private interests framing legislation, to the present practice of employing "people's experts" for this work.

To return to Orton. In the session of 1899 he took a strong hand in advancing progressive legislation, as shown by his efforts in putting through the bills increasing the taxes upon the state's great insurance corporations. He was then looked upon as one of the coming leaders in the reform legislation which shrewd politicians saw was impending. Then came the campaign of 1900, with its multiplicity of gubernatorial candidates, and the final complete triumph of LaFollette for the nomination. Orton had himself had dreams of the governorship, but his county elected LaFollette delegates to the state convention. Orton was returned to the assembly and appointed chairman of the important committee on the judiciary, but disappointed the expectations of his former friends by reversing his previous course and becoming the reactionary leader of the assembly, thus almost completely destroying the influence he had acquired. So completely was he discredited that although he was chairman of its most important committee, and perhaps its ablest member, the assembly took the remarkable course of rejecting, as a rule, the measures favorably reported by the committee and advancing measures on which the committee reported adversely. Yet the legis-

lation so enacted in the face of the committee on judiciary stands on the statute books today. Naturally Orton was not returned to the legislature in 1903.

Three candidates were brought out for the speakership, George H. Ray of LaCrosse, who had been speaker in the sessions of 1899 and 1901; Ira B. Bradford of Augusta, and Irvine L. Lenroot of Superior, who had made such a brilliant record in debate in the previous session as to make him a marked man among his colleagues. The administration forces centering on Lenroot, he was nominated in the republican caucus and the next day elected on motion of Mr. Ray.

But the administration failed to capture the senate although ten of the eighteen new members chosen were administration men. The senate line-up was: Stalwart republicans, 16; stalwart democrats, 2; administration republicans, 14; administration democrats, 1. Among the strong administration senators returned were H. C. Martin, W. H. Hatton, J. H. Stout and J. J. McGillivray, while among stalwarts returned were A. M. ("Long") Jones, A. L. Kreutzer and Barney A. Eaton. There were eleven holdover stalwart senators, all of whom had been members of the Republican League. Accordingly the stalwarts organized the senate.

Again Governor LaFollette appeared in person and read his message which was the longest so far in state history. In its exhaustive treatment of recommendations it was unparalleled. A new war cry in Wisconsin politics, the demand for a railway commission to fix and regulate rates, was the striking feature of it. In support of the demand for a commission, great tables of impressive statistics—the work of Halford E. Erickson, Walter Drew and C. A. Tupper of Milwaukee—were presented to show that the people of Wisconsin were paying from 28 to 40 per cent more in freights for the same length of haul than were the people of Iowa and Illinois where

there were commissions to regulate rates. The message also endorsed the ad valorem tax idea, gave ominous warning to the lobby and showed unflinching firmness for primary election legislation. It was described by an opponent as "vigorous, drastic and alive, studiously conservative in tone, but positive." Even outside of the state it occasioned much comment. Its marked statesmanship was noted and its author was suspected of bidding for the favorable notice of a larger field than his home constituency. Said the *Wisconsin State Journal*:

The fact is, Governor LaFollette was talking less to Wisconsin Thursday than to the nation. He counts himself and the issues he stands for no present day matters, but permanent, abiding. The delivery of the address, the few hundred people before him were but an incident. LaFollette was talking to the American people; to his generation everywhere.

The message presaged stormy times ahead were the railroads to contest the governor's demands. It was pointed out by the governor's opponents that A. R. Hall had session after session introduced a railway commission bill and time after time had also read tables of rates "equidistant from Chicago," without even getting his bill through one house, but here was a new and masterful champion of the idea who could command a following which Hall could not. Opposition to the governor's program included fighting primary elections as well as railway legislation, although some discerning stalwart leaders counseled otherwise. One of them wrote: "With public sentiment behind LaFollette the situation will not be what it was two years ago. I should say the legislator who took a stand now that 'there is nothing in primary elections' would be inviting a return to private life."

Both sides prepared for a hard struggle. The stalwart press began publishing long articles on the operation of the railway commission laws in Illinois and Iowa to prove their value was small, while the administration

organs printed statistics to prove that the people of Wisconsin were the victims of discrimination.

While there were many other significant contests over measures of no little importance, the great legislative battles of the session were over primary elections, ad valorem taxation of railways and railway rate regulation. Briefly, some phases of these contests may be noticed, beginning with that over the primary election bill.

On January 30 primary election bills much like the rejected Stevens bill of the previous session were introduced by Assemblyman Andrew, chairman of the assembly committee on privileges and elections, and Assemblyman Frear, ranking member of the same committee. Three days later, Monday, February 2, a new bill, a substitute to 97a (the Stevens bill, by the way, was known as 98a) was reported by the committee. Rushed through its preliminary stages, it was passed on Friday, by a vote of 70 to 19, Assemblyman Frear making the principal speech in favor of the bill, and on Monday, February 9, a week after its introduction, it was messaged to the senate.

In the meantime Assemblymen Ray and Wallrich had sought to obtain delay and nearly a dozen other members had presented various exempting and dilatory amendments, but to no avail. The celerity of action with which the bill was passed was described as "characteristic of the administration," but the administration took the ground that since the whole subject had been thrashed over at the previous session there was no need for delay.

In the senate it was a different story. Owing to the requests for delay by stalwart members, it was not to come to a vote in that house until March 26.

This delay was due to a peculiar dilemma in which the stalwarts found themselves, and to a lack of strong and intelligent leadership. The three big administra-

tion measures, the primary election, the railway ad valorem and the railway commission bills, were equally objectionable to them, but it would not do to kill them all, as they would make good issues for LaFollette and his supporters in the next campaign were they turned down. This had been demonstrated in the defeat of the Stevens bill in the last session. Yet were the primary bill to go through it would give LaFollette more power and prestige. There was little choice between the two horns of the dilemma. In their perplexity, the stalwart leaders in the legislature finally decided to lay the case before the two United States senators at Washington for solution. The decision of the leaders at the national capital was that LaFollette should be fought on other measures, but that the primary bill should go through with a referendum feature and that it should be made the issue in the next campaign and killed at the polls, if possible. This fact is admitted in an interesting revelation in the stalwart history of the period by E. L. Philipp, which reads:

In this emergency a messenger was sent to Washington for the purpose of explaining the situation to the two senators and the members of the lower house, particularly Congressman Babcock, and get them to agree upon some line of action. Senator Quarles, out of deference to Senator Spooner's seniority, declined to move without the express sanction of the latter, but he signified his willingness to do his full duty in the work of redeeming the party in the state from political disruption. Mr. Babcock took the same position, arguing that it was the senior senator's place to either lead the party himself or consent to the selection of some other person to assume the responsibilities as well as the labors of leadership. There was conference after conference, Senator Spooner's well known distaste for practical politics, together with his disinclination to authorize another, however able and willing to lead, to speak and act for him, making it impossible for days to come to an understanding.

The final outcome of the conferences, however, was that Mr. Babcock was delegated to come to Wisconsin and assume the leadership of the stalwart, or conservative republicans. One of the

conditions laid down by Senator Spooner before the arrangements were completed was that the primary election bill with a referendum clause was to be passed by the state senate. It was agreed that the two United States senators and the members of congress who were not in accord with Governor LaFollette were to take an active part in the next campaign for the purpose of defeating the bill when it was presented to the people for their endorsement by popular vote.

Having succeeded in the mission that took him to Washington, the messenger returned to Wisconsin and reported. He was followed in a few days by Mr. Babeock who established himself at Madison and undertook to advise the stalwarts in the legislature as to the course they should pursue. He assured the stalwart senators that they could count on the co-operation of Senators Spooner and Quarles, as well as certain congressmen of whom he was one, and that an earnest effort would be made to perfect a real organization, one that could go into a campaign with a prospect of winning.

With this understanding the stalwart members of the state senate agreed to carry out the plan proposed by Mr. Babeock, as originally outlined by Senator Spooner, although Senator Whitehead and others were not convinced of its wisdom. Mr. Babeock assumed the responsibilities of the position assigned to him by the other leaders and it was by his direction that the primary bill, objectionable as it was to the stalwart state senators, was passed practically in its original form with the referendum section attached.

In order to gain time to get out of their quandary, Senator Whitehead on March 5 moved that the bill go over till March 26. While this was understood to be simply a move to gain time, the senate agreed to the postponement, but remembering that Whitehead had held the railway tax bills for two months without action in the session of 1901 the members smiled, and Senator North solemnly proposed that the rattlesnake bounty bill also go over to the same date. Others proposed that March 26 be made a legal holiday, or at least an eight-hour day. The assembly also held a sort of mock session in observance of the senate action.

Finally, on March 26, on motion of Senator Whitehead, the stalwart majority in the senate, after voting down a

number of amendments, concurred in the assembly bill with an amendment by Senator Gaveney that the main portion of the bill be submitted to a popular vote at the election to be held in November, 1904. This was as far as the stalwarts were willing to go. The assembly rejecting the Gaveney amendment, the bill was buffeted back and forth, but each house voted to stand firm and the measure had to be sent to conference.

However, the conferees were not able to agree on details and day after day went by until it was freely predicted by many that primary legislation was dead for the session. But they came together on a proposition to submit the whole primary bill to the voters at the next general election and on May 20, three days before adjournment, the senate accepted the amendment and the bill went to the governor with the referendum clause.

Governor LaFollette had wished that the measure might have contained a provision for second choice voting and one limiting the expenditures of candidates. Had these provisions been incorporated, the state might have been spared the scandal attending the election of Senator Stephenson in 1908 and the Wisconsin primary law not been subject to the criticism and misconstruction it then received in many quarters of the country where the conditions surrounding its passage were not known. However, the opposition refused to grant either of these propositions and Governor LaFollette finally signed the bill.

When the primary election bill was in process of enactment the stalwart opposition demanded a provision for independent candidates after the primary nominations might be made. Such provision was incorporated in the law and naturally is as much a part of the law as any other, and its exercise is as legitimate as any other. In fact, it broadens the field for the exercise of the primary idea, by giving the freest democratic expres-

sion in the choice of candidates. Yet when LaFollette has himself exercised this freest and legitimate provision of the law—so strongly demanded by the opposition—he has been denounced by the same opposition interests. The very thing which they demanded for “circumventing his own law” they have criticized him for employing. It is therefore idle and unnecessary to offer any explanations or apologies for LaFollette’s advocacy of “independents” now and then; such course has been in accord with the very spirit of the primary idea.

The primary battle of this session may thus be said to have been a draw, with a temporary advantage to the opposition in that it perpetuated the caucus and convention system for another campaign and gave the stalwarts opportunity for another battle on the issue.

It was the plan of Senator Spooner and the other leaders to make primary elections the big issue of the next campaign. It was assumed that LaFollette would not again be a candidate for reelection and that if his program could be defeated at this session and the primary law beaten at the polls in 1904, a quietus would be put upon his agitations. It was to prove a bad political guess. With the advent of LaFollette as a candidate for a third term, the primary election issue was destined to be completely overshadowed in the larger general issue of “LaFolletteism.”

Dissatisfaction over the amount of taxes paid by the railroads under the old license fee system had been of long standing in the minds of many people of the state and this dissatisfaction had increased through the agitations of A. R. Hall, who ever since his entrance in the assembly in 1891 had charged the railroads with shirking their full responsibility in this respect and had urged an increase in their license fees. It was largely because of this crusading by Hall that the state tax commission was finally created. Up to the time of the session of 1903,

however, the railroad lobby had succeeded in defeating all legislation looking toward an increase in railroad taxation.

When it was proposed in the legislature of 1899 to redeem the party pledge to increase the taxes on railroads and other corporations the lobby succeeded in substituting a bill to create a permanent tax commission on the ground that only through such a body could anything like a just and proper system of taxation be worked out. To the lobby agents, said LaFollette in his message of 1903, this measure "presented the relief of postponement." Again the railroads escaped in the session of 1901 by the bold and ruthless slaying of the bills proposed by the tax commission.

At the opening of the session of 1903 Governor LaFollette made a firm demand for ad valorem legislation. In unequivocal language he said:

This is not a question of policy. The railroad companies of this state owe the state more than \$1,000,000 a year. For many years, because of the postponement or defeat of legislation requiring them to pay their proportionate share of the taxes, the other taxpayers of Wisconsin have paid for them \$1,000,000 annually. The case has been tried; the hearing has been full. Judgment has been given again and again. Pledges have been made by political parties and repeated by candidates for office, over and over again. The question is not an open one. There is no opportunity for misunderstanding. There is no room for speculation. The truth is ascertained. The truth is known. It is lodged in the public mind to stay. The people want \$1,000,000 a year because it is the sum owing. They are not to be wheedled by any soft phrases about "conservatism." There is nothing to compromise. Equal and just taxation is a fundamental principle of republican government. The amount due as taxes from railroads and other public service corporations should be paid, and paid in full, and I am confident that legislation to secure that payment will be promptly enacted.

On January 26, soon after the opening of this session, the tax commission presented an elaborate report in which that body also recommended the adoption of the

ad valorem system, after an exhaustive review of the situation with reference to the railroads. The suggestion was made by the commission that the license fee system be retained for several years, but that the ad valorem basis should govern whether the amount of computed taxes went above or below the license fees. Bills to this end were prepared by the tax commission and committees on taxation, but before they were introduced notices of a hearing were sent the presidents of all the railroads operating in the state with a request that they and their attorneys attend in person and present their objections, if any they had, to the proposed change.

Such officials duly appeared at the hearing and insisted that the railroads were already paying more taxes than other forms of property and that the ad valorem system as tried in other states had proved unsatisfactory to both the railroads and the states. Later, the attorneys of the roads presented their briefs and the extraordinary arrogance and audacity of the lobby of the time was strikingly illustrated in the brief of George R. Peck, chief counsel of the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul road. A large portion of this remarkable paper was devoted to hostile animadversions upon the governor and the tax commission. Thus in a reference to the governor, he said:

So far as I have read the literature of this subject—I mean the Wisconsin literature—only one person in official life has asserted or assumed that ultimate wisdom rests only in his own absolute and unerring knowledge.

This attack produced a sensation in the state press and, needless to say, did not aid the cause of the railroads.

On February 13, ad valorem bills, as prepared, in the main, by the tax commission, were introduced in both houses of the legislature by the committees on taxation.

The bills of the two houses differed in some respects, the assembly measure providing, for instance, that the

ad valorem system go into effect in 1903, while the senate bill postponed the operation for a year. The senate bill also provided for the exemption of railroad bonds from taxation, while the house measure had no such provision. The tax commission was divided on the latter proposition, N. P. Haugen, a member of the commission, standing out against such exemption on the grounds that credits were property, that in no other state were they exempted and that such exemptions would be a step without precedent.

The senate bill was never to emerge from committee until withdrawn, weeks afterward, by unanimous consent; but the assembly bill was passed unanimously March 6 and messaged to the senate. Here the bill was amended so as to exempt railroad bonds and to postpone the operation of the law for a year. This change produced a long deadlock in conference.

In the meantime the ad valorem issue had become overshadowed by the great fight over the railway commission bill which had been introduced in the assembly the same day the ad valorem bill was passed, March 6.

But distasteful as both measures were to the railroads, it was felt even by the supporters of the railroads in the legislature that some legislation on the subject of taxation was imperative. Governor LaFollette was thundering for action, as was a large portion of the state press.

The tax commission having recommended the ad valorem system, the stalwart leaders felt that the ad valorem bill could not be so safely slaughtered as the railway commission bill urged by the governor. But the railroad managers saw more than this. To them it appeared both good politics and good policy to accept the ad valorem measure if the rate commission bill could be killed.

Accordingly the rate commission bill was brought forward and indefinitely postponed and the senate then permitted the ad valorem bill to go through as a conces-

sion to a popular demand that could no longer be resisted, it being charged at the time that a railroad attorney so advised, and that he added, significantly, that with the commission bill beaten the railroads could get the increased taxes back by simply raising their rates. In the meantime the conferees had made mutual concessions, the senate members finally withdrawing their demand for the exemption of railroad bonds, and the assembly members consenting to postpone the application of the ad valorem system for a year.

Thus the railroads who had so long cleverly prevented an increase in their taxes escaped for another year, and likewise the state was again beaten out of what the administration insisted was its just dues.



Mrs. LaFollette Speaking

CHAPTER XVII

Railroad Commission Bill.

BECOMES NEW ISSUE—LAST BIG LEGISLATIVE BATTLE OF LA-FOLLETTE REGIME—SPIRITED COMMITTEE HEARINGS—GOVERNOR SUBMITS LONG SPECIAL MESSAGE—GREAT GATHERING OF SHIPPERS APPEARS IN PROTEST—BRILLIANT NIGHT DEBATE—MEASURE KILLED—RAILROAD “RED LINE” INCIDENT—GREAT POWER OF LOBBY SHOWN.

NEXT in interest in this session to the battle over the primary election bill—if indeed not exceeding this struggle in intensity and significance—was the contest over the railway commission bill. If not the greatest, it was the last and most fiercely contested of the big legislative battles of the LaFollette regime and was replete with dramatic features. The battle was fought out wholly in the assembly, the measure never coming before the senate.

It was LaFollette's masterly move in pressing this new issue that made practically untenable the position of the stalwarts on the primary election and ad valorem measures. It upset all their previous calculations, called for new alignments, and promised a new issue, to meet which it would be necessary to abandon everything else.

In line with the recommendations of Governor LaFollette's message, the assembly committee on railroads on March 6 introduced a bill creating an appointive commission with large powers, including that of the fixing of railroad rates. The original measure provided that the rates then in effect should remain as the maximum rates until changed by the commission, but following the hearings the committee presented a substitute more drastic than the original, requiring the commission to fix and establish new rates. The law as finally enacted in 1905 was in effect the original bill of 1903, providing

for an appointive commission with powers to regulate rates instead of inaugurating an entire new set of rates.

The battle lines quickly formed on this newest "menace to business" by the administration. Dramatic scenes marked the hearings on the measure. Once T. C. Richmond of Madison—then an ardent progressive—in appearing before the committee in behalf of certain shippers of dairy products, told how a man in Shawano had found it necessary to go to Chicago to ascertain from the railroads if he would be given a rate by which he could meet competition. Mr. Richmond denounced a condition that made it possible for railroads to thus dictate the life or death of individuals and towns. Richmond declining to give the names of his informants, Burton Hanson, attorney for the St. Paul railroad, declared his belief that no such statements had been made, whereupon the fiery Madison lawyer advanced upon him and shaking his fist in the railroad attorney's face shouted: "The gentleman has passed a remark that



Old Assembly Chamber of Wisconsin Capitol

he wouldn't dare to repeat in the open." Hired claquers were even employed, it was said, to create applause whenever the railroad attorneys made a telling point.

The stalwart members of the legislature professed to be greatly opposed to the appointive feature of the proposed commission law, and at this session, and in the campaign following, persistently urged an elective commission; but Governor LaFollette and his supporters were determined that if the commission measure became law it should be administered by a picked body of men from whom the best results might be expected in the effort to make the law a success.

This view was abundantly justified in the excellent appointments made by Governor LaFollette in the commission as originally formed. On April 28, before a vote had been taken on the measure, Governor LaFollette again appeared and read a lengthy special message of over one hundred pages, fortified by seventy-five more pages of statistics, in support of the bill, to prove that Wisconsin was paying higher freight rates than Illinois or Iowa, which states had rate commissions.

In this message, as in his previous one, the governor took occasion to speak to the larger ear of the nation by a caustic discussion of the limited powers of the interstate commerce commission. The railroad attorneys who had opposed the rate bill had declared that the existing laws of the state fully protected the people against transportation abuses and had kept pace with interstate commerce legislation. After pointing out in sarcastic and pitying phrase the then very small powers of the interstate commerce commission, the governor said in reference to his own state:

In truth and in fact the Wisconsin statutes and the authority of the railroad commissioner stand today a shame and a reproach to a state of Wisconsin's industrial and commercial rank.

The lobby was sharply scored, the governor declaring that an organization was formed before the legislature

met for the purpose not only of defeating this legislation, but of defeating any attempt to pass a bill increasing the taxes upon railroads. The logical sequence, he said, would mean an increase in rates. The shippers who opposed the legislation, he charged, were acting under direction of the railroads. The shippers might be satisfied, he said, but the people of the state would never be until they were placed upon an equal footing.

At this fresh and emphatic insistence on rate legislation the railroad lobby sent out a cry of alarm and the next day the largest gathering of citizens ever assembled in Madison in active connection with legislation appeared in the form of shippers from all over the state, come at the behest of the railroads to protest against the passage of the bill.

The shippers met in the senate chamber and after due discussion adopted a formal protest which had been drawn up, and this protest signed by 164 firms and individuals was laid on the desk of every member. They also joined with the lobby in an active canvass among the legislators to secure the defeat of the bill. To give significance to the occasion the great Senator Spooner, fresh from the prestige of a unanimous re-election at the hands of both administration and stalwart members, arrived in Madison that day and gave added heart and exaltation to the opposition.

The protest of the shippers contained among other things the following statements:

To the Assembly of the State of Wisconsin:

We respectfully but most earnestly protest against the passage of the railway commission bill, and, in support of our position, beg leave to invite your attention to the reasons for such opposition.

Wisconsin is a manufacturing and producing state. Its farms, its factories, its mines, and its forests are the sources of its wealth and its greatness. Any legislation, the tendency of which will be to jeopardize or harass these interests, is not deserving of the support of any citizen who has the welfare of the state at heart.

The producers of Wisconsin have, after many years of labor and effort, succeeded in bringing about the adoption by the railroad companies of the state of such commodity, group and concentration rates as are best fitted to develop their business interests and promote the growth of the state. This has been accomplished with the least injury to any of the interests of the state; indeed it has resulted to the general benefit of all. In dependence upon these rates, large investments have been made, great manufacturing and shipping industries have been built up, and plans perfected which will materially aid in the future growth of the state.

We believe that any attempt to disturb this system of transportation rates will unsettle the business affairs of the state, endanger investments, and interfere with the development of our industries.

If those who are in charge of the business interests of the state are satisfied with the present rates of transportation, it would seem that those who manage the politics of the state ought to be satisfied, and not interfere or attempt to interfere in our business affairs. We know whereof we speak. We know that the pending bill is a menace to our business, and to the general welfare of the state.

In view of the splendid results that have followed the adoption of the rate commission law, it is interesting to note in this connection that in the following year another protest was issued signed by sixty-three leading manufacturers. That address contained, among other things, the following:

The proposition to have enacted in this state laws * * * conferring power upon a board of railway commissioners to prescribe a schedule of rates under which all the traffic of the state shall be moved, will, if carried out, be fraught with dire results to our manufacturing interests. Under the present system of transportation rates in use in this state for many years, the material interests in our farms, mines, factories and forests have enjoyed a well-balanced and great prosperity, in marked contrast with the state of Iowa, where under a system of inflexible distance tariff rates fixed by a commission, the business of manufacturing has languished, to the great detriment of the people and to the state at large. *

Under the present method of adjusting rates, and after long and continued effort on the part of our manufacturers, in which the transportation companies have willingly joined, a system of

freight tariffs has been built up in Wisconsin which enables the manufacturers doing business in the various centers of the state, to secure their raw material and to reach the distributing centers, or gateways of the country, with their finished products on substantially even terms, thereby enabling them to compete with each other, as well as with the manufacturers of other states located more conveniently to the markets.

The policy of equalizing carrying charges between points within the state, and from points in this state to distributing centers or gateways outside of the state, has encouraged, and is encouraging the location of manufacturing plants and centers at places widely separated throughout the state, thus aiding in a healthy and widespread development of all resources, resulting in great and inestimable benefit to all of our people.

The attempted rearrangement by a railway commission of the freight tariffs and system, so built up and developed, would result in widespread disturbance to business interests; continued uncertainty as to rates, and the financial ruin of many of our industries, the very existence of which is almost wholly dependent upon the undisturbed continuance of the present system.

The great power of the highly organized lobby of the time was to be proved in the overwhelming defeat of the bill. The measure came up as special order at 10 o'clock in the morning of April 30, and was debated until after midnight. Great crowds were attracted to the capitol to witness the brilliant struggle and joined feverishly in the excitement prevailing.

Leading the fight for the measure were Speaker Lenroot, Assemblyman J. A. Frear of Hudson, and Chairman C. W. Gilman of Mondovi, of the assembly committee on railroads, others who took the floor for the bill being Assemblymen David Evans, Jr., of Waushara, A. H. Dahl of Vernon county, Henry Johnson of Oconto, O. G. Kinney, who had succeeded A. R. Hall, W. L. Root of Appleton, W. S. Irvine of Clark, and E. W. LeRoy of Marinette, while speaking in opposition were Assemblymen Frank A. Cady of Marshfield, a former administration floor leader, who surprised his colleagues by going over to the other side; A. L. Osborn, a lumberman of

Iron county; W. C. Cowling of Oshkosh, Charles Barker of Milwaukee, and M. J. Wallrich of Shawano.

Conscious of its power to kill the measure, the opposition voted down all amendments, including one by Assemblyman Torger G. Thompson of Dane county, for an elective commission and one by Assemblyman LeRoy for a referendum. Then came the defeat of the committee substitute and finally, when it was seen the measure was doomed, the killing of the bill by a vote of 67 to 25, on motion of former Speaker Ray of LaCrosse.

The rate regulation question thus went over to become one of the burning issues of the next campaign.

Attention has been called to the action of certain shippers in the campaign of 1904 in continuing their opposition to a commission law. A further observation may be made.

When the rate commission bill again came up in the session of 1905 these same protesting shippers who had been as the leaves of the forest at the previous session failed to reappear at Madison, and thereby hangs a tale.

Among the few bills affecting the railroads which slipped through at the session of 1903 was one in response to a special message by Governor LaFollette authoring the railroad commissioner to make an investigation of the books of the railroad companies operating in the state to ascertain if the companies had included in their reports of gross earnings the rebates they had been giving for years back. The governor held that such rebates should be included in the gross earnings and be subject to tax. Although a sensation was created by the message, the bill was allowed to go through. After due examination Railroad Commissioner Thomas reported the following year the discovery that rebates to the amount of \$4,500,000 had been given by the railroads to favored shippers. Sprung at a psychological moment in the sharp campaign of 1904, this revelation

bore immediate political results, but was to prove of further significance later.

In his message at the following session the governor briefly observed that all shippers were entitled to protection against extortion from the railroads, but were any shippers voluntarily aiding the railroads in the maintenance of high rates in order that they might themselves receive lower rates, then the public was entitled to protection against such shippers.

Believing that the governor had obtained the names of those who had been favored in the matter of rebates, no shippers appeared at the next session to oppose rate regulation.

In retreat, as it were, after this rate commission battle, Governor LaFollette turned suddenly, and in an attack from an unexpected quarter appeared to the startled opposition for a time to be in a fair way of changing defeat into victory. This move was his attempted check-mating of the so-called "railroads' red line," and illustrated the resourcefulness of the governor.

While the railroad ad valorem bill was pending in the senate the state board of control advertised for bids for coal for the state penal and charitable institutions. In their bids the coal companies inserted a provision underscored in red that such contracts were subject to changes that might be made in freight rates through pending legislation. Immediately upon receipt of this information Governor LaFollette sent a special message to the legislature recommending the prompt enactment of a law to prevent any increase in transportation charges by the railroads in Wisconsin above those in force on June 15 preceding. Calling attention to the action of the coal companies, Governor LaFollette charged that they had "received suggestions from railroad officials" and said:

A study of the transportation charges in this state throughout the years covered by the efforts made to increase railroad taxation will show such advance as leaves little doubt that there has been

upon the part of the railroads a forehanded determination to be prepared against legislation equalizing taxation.

A bill to meet the governor's recommendations was promptly introduced by the assembly committee on railroads. The railroad lobby was astounded by the boldness and rapidity of these moves. Were this bill to pass the recent defeat of the rate commission bill might prove largely a barren victory. It would prevent the raising of rates by which the railroads hoped to render harmless the ad valorem bill. Accordingly the lobby moved in force upon the assembly.

A year or two ago, a former assemblyman while engaged in destroying old papers came upon a mass of telegrams. "I think I shall have to keep these," he said smiling. "They remind me of the morning when we passed the maximum red-line freight bill and when our mail boxes were so stuffed with telegrams of protest against the bill that there was no room for our letters."

These telegrams apparently came largely from the very shippers who had recently fought the rate commission bill and who now appeared to take the very strange position of opposing a law to prevent the raising of their own rates. However, the telegrams were largely of a "fake" nature, uniform in style, and many were afterwards repudiated by shippers whose names they professed to bear. Indeed at a political meeting the following year one assemblyman (Finnegan) produced a handful of telegrams from certain shippers favoring the bill and another handful opposing the measure, and signed by the same shippers, all bearing the same date.

To the surprise of everyone the assembly passed the bill, and without debate, May 12, by a vote of 55 to 37, at practically the same hour of the day that the senate concurred in the ad valorem bill. The railroad attorneys then promptly shifted their attentions to the senate where they saved the day by bringing about the defeat of the bill by a vote of 20 to 10, also without debate.

CHAPTER XVIII

Incidents of Session of 1903.

RE-ELECTION OF SENATOR SPOONER—PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT VISITS CAPITAL—A PERIOD OF TEEMING ACTIVITY—WALWORTH COUNTY POLITICS REVIEWED.

BESIDES its great legislative battles the session of 1903 was replete with other incidents of a more or less extraordinary nature.

On January 28, John C. Spooner was re-elected United States senator, receiving the unanimous republican vote. Naturally this was made a state occasion and party and factional differences were laid aside to give him honor on his appearance to accept the election. In view of the fact that this election had followed his announcement that he would not again be a candidate, which had proved a nine-day wonder of the time, and of the controversy—necessary or otherwise—which had been waged over him for the past two years, unusual interest attached in his appearance. This was further heightened by the presence of Governor LaFollette, members of the legislature and the supreme court. As the cynosure of a crowded chamber of men and women, and with his political opponents before him, the senator labored under tremendous stress and the speech which he held in his hand trembled like a leaf throughout its delivery.

* * *

Relieving for a space the factional tension of the time, was a visit to the capital by President Roosevelt, with the usual ovation from the citizens and an address to the legislature as incidents.

On a previous occasion when Roosevelt had come to the city to speak before the State Historical Society he had been a guest at the LaFollette home, yet on this occa-

sion it was attempted to show that the governor was not very enthusiastic over the strenuous executive, and in fact suspected the president's sincerity.

In his introduction of the president, Governor LaFollette said: "The people are for you because they believe you are the exponent, the fearless exponent, of that principle (Lincoln's) in this country."

The stalwart press noted that LaFollette said not "you are," but "they believe you are, etc." Accordingly, he was charged with doubting the president's sincerity. It illustrated the fierceness of the light beating upon the governor's every action.

This session was to witness, also, the grand culmination of the old-time lobby in its extraordinary influence and power. Prof. E. A. Ross—evidently forgetting the reconstruction period—recently gave the view that the year 1903 was the nadir of our national political life; with almost equal truth the same might be said of Wisconsin politics of the period.

Other legislatures may have been marked by more discreditable subserviency to the lobby, greater pliancy to the influence of money, but the moral issues being not then so sharply drawn their practices were accepted as a matter of course. In view of the fact that the issues were more clearly presented in its day, the legislature of 1903 has a sordid record to defend. However, when it is remembered that for number, boldness and effrontery the lobby of this session probably surpassed any other in the state's history, its influence should not occasion wonder. In numbers it far exceeded the legislature itself. Some idea of the cost of maintenance of this potent "third house" may be drawn from the fact that M. C. Ring, attorney for the Chicago & Northwestern railroad, swore to an expenditure by his company alone for salaries and other expenses for the session of \$6,931.93. It is

known also that statements of lobby expenditures of that period were notoriously incomplete.

In addition to killing the rate commission bill and the maximum freight bill, the lobby had a number of other notable victories to its credit at this session. Among such may be cited the defeat of the Irvine anti-lobby bill, the grain inspection bill, the bill to prohibit railroads from granting rebates, the two-cent railroad fare bill and the Donald telephone bill aimed to prohibit the Bell telephone company's practice of giving low rates to crush out independent competition where such existed and making up the loss by increased rates where it enjoyed a monopoly. All these measures went down to death. In the interests of the food adulterators, the lobby was also active in opposing all pure food legislation attempted at this session.

This record was doubtless responsible for the enactment by the next legislature of the anti-lobby law, requiring registration on the part of all legislative agents and interests employing them and limiting their activities to arguments before committees.

Reference has been made to the employment of a woman to help defeat the railway taxation bill in the session of 1901. There were other instances of the use of women's wiles to bring about results. In the good old days when the third house was at its height in numbers and influence there was usually a generous sprinkling about the statehouse of daughters of the gods divinely tall, and correspondingly alluring, and not infrequently they were employed as factors in influencing legislation.

"I noticed you refused to speak to me last night," said one Wisconsin solon to another after a meeting at a restaurant where each had been accompanied by a peroxide blonde. "Yes," replied Solon No. 2, with con-

sunmate gravity, "I was afraid my wife might not care to meet the lady with you."

In one of the sessions of this period also occurred the hatpin episode, whose story went its frequent and jesting round at the time and which scarcely deserves notice now save as illustrative of the practices of the time and because of its direct influence upon the legislation of the session.

Among the legislators was a certain administration member whose feet were not of too enduring material. Either in a spirit of sport or of machiavelian design someone conceived the idea of winning him over by throwing an unprincipled woman across his path. It was arranged with the woman that while posing at a mirror with him by her side passing upon her appearance she should, seemingly by accident, scratch him across the cheek with a hatpin. The pact was carried out and the legislator duly appeared with a scratch across his cheek. The conspirators immediately surrounded him and in seeming solicitude asked the cause of his accident. He explained that he had fallen against a sharp corner of his dresser. A loud guffaw greeted his answer. "Ha! ha! ha!" came in a chorus; "well, old boy, the drinks are on you, but we'll pass you up this time if you'll vote right on the railroad bill when it comes up. Oh, you can't explain; we've heard all about it and—we can produce the woman. We've got the goods on you. You surely don't want to scandalize yourself and your family?" He voted against the bill. The reprehensible little ruse had worked. But his conscience worrying him at the betrayal of his pledges, he finally made a full explanation of the affair to Governor LaFollette. "You should have called their bluff," said the governor grimly, "and seen if they had dared carry out their hellish plot to the end. I doubt if the cowards had."

The so-called Anna Held incident may be here cited

also, since it was one that attained to a somewhat tenacious celebrity. Four senators and one assemblyman set out one evening to enjoy a lark in the manner of the time. When a mildly mellow stage had been reached, they repaired in a body to the Fuller opera house where Anna Held and her troupe were holding the boards that night. To the better enjoy the occasion, the party took a box and in the course of the performance flirted furiously with "the nymphie Anna of the ambient eyes" and her Ionic-shaped sisters. The student stage door johnnies on this occasion must have been quickly put hors de combat by these veterans, for it was not long before this legislative coterie was snugly ensconced in the room of one of the senators and about a table whose graceful setting included a bevy of dimpled divinities from the visiting troupe. The subsequent jollity reached an altitudinous state, so high in fact that the night operator in the telephone office overhead became alarmed and called up the police station, declaring that she feared a tragedy was being enacted below her, judging from the screams that she heard. Responding to the riot-call, the police burst in upon the revel to the consternation of the participants and broke it up, in the course of which proceeding it became necessary to tap one of the senators with a billy. News of the occurrence leaked out next day and made one of the "biggest stories" Winter Everett ever "pulled off."

The distinction thus earned clung for years to the participants, to which a tantalizing opposition press loved to refer as the "Anna Held legislators." One development of the affair was a libel suit brought against the *Free Press* by one Milwaukee member whose name the paper had erroneously used in connection with the affair. The manner in which this suit was suppressed because of subsequent investigation made by "Bill" Powell forms one of the most incredulous, thrilling and amusing stories in the private annals of the craft.

A tragic episode which gives some idea of the tenseness of feeling and keenness of rivalry between the factions at this time is recalled. During the crisis of a very important measure one member of the legislature, who had been counted an administration supporter, was called home by a death in his family. On his return to Madison he was met at the station by a number of his stalwart colleagues and told, according to the story soon afterward current, that a certain mortgage upon his farm would be extended, but the bill in question must first be killed. The news that he had been taken in tow by the opposition was conveyed to Governor LaFollette, who suspecting something was wrong sent for the member. It was after midnight and the poor old farmer, crushed with grief and beaten down and bewildered by the importunations of the stalwarts, presented a sorry spectacle. The governor inquired kindly regarding his family affairs and finally adverted to the bill in question, whereupon the old man burst into tears and informed the governor that he had promised to vote against the measure. "But you first promised me to vote for it?" said the governor. "I know it is wrong," said the old man, "but they have got me where they can ruin me. It is a case of life and death with me, almost." The old man walked out in silence. It was one of those tragedies that drove the iron into men's souls.

* * *

If the sentiment expressed by Byron, "One glorious hour of crowded fame is worth an age without a name," ever appealed to LaFollette it must have come to him with peculiar force in those history-making days, for events fairly trod one another's heels. The executive office was not only the political nerve-center of the state, but a decidedly sensitive and active one. Frequently the lights would be seen blinking from its windows all night long. At this spectacle the opposition stalwart leaders

would gaze in rueful speculation and apprehension. Too often it meant that some sledgehammer blow was about to descend upon them in some unexpected quarter, some coup at some unguarded point that would leave their hopes high and dry.

As with Caesar, of whom it is related that he could defer sleep to extraordinary lengths when necessary and then take it in snatches, on horseback, beside campfires, in the rain, so with LaFollette. It came to be said of him that he didn't sleep, but simply assumed another position. Even in his earlier days, in the practice of the law, he would often remain with a case until he had mastered it, taking his necessary sleep on the floor with a law book for a pillow. "Let's go up to the executive residence and call on the governor before you leave town," said one Madisonian to a visitor at 2 o'clock one morning. Such unconventional proceeding was nothing strange at that time.

On the occasion of one of his visits to Milwaukee, Governor LaFollette was accompanied by one of his lieutenants, A. T. Torge. "Now, Torge," said he on arriving at his hotel, "I want to go up stairs and take a little nap this afternoon; you wake me in fifteen minutes." "Thought I to myself," said Torge, "what you need is fifteen hours sleep; I'll give you three anyway," and to prevent anyone disturbing his charge he locked the door and putting the key in his pocket went down stairs. In a quarter of an hour he was astonished to hear loud thumpings from the room he had just left. The governor had slept his self-prescribed time and now wanted to get out.

The governor's capacity for work was prodigious. An attorney pitted against LaFollette in a certain case once remarked, "what can we expect to do against a man who works 25 hours a day?" For weeks at a time during this session he averaged but three or four hours sleep a

night. Invariably the lights in the executive office blazed until long after midnight, occasionally all night.

While possessing remarkable facility for turning off callers, LaFollette frequently abandoned everything else to enjoy a visitor. If he became interested it mattered not that callers on missions of the most vital import were impatiently pacing the floor of the anteroom; they simply had to wait until he had heard out some story or had himself related some Colorado hunting experience or amusing Chautauqua incident. While he was governor, much of the official work could be done only after midnight and in the early forenoon. The various bills and other matters would then be studied and considered. A small room in the basement beneath the executive office had been fitted up for his use and here completely shut off from the clamorous outside world he would work undisturbed. Occasionally his advisers and favored visitors were also received here and could the walls of this retreat have spoken they might have revealed many a tale of plot and counterplot in comparison with which this history were tame reading.

It happened that one night after the final adjournment of the legislature a group of "half-breed" legislators came to the executive office at 2 o'clock in the morning. LaFollette was in the dungeon below signing bills and preparing to take a 4 o'clock train on a lecturing tour. Finally he came up stairs and meeting Senator George Wylie, he threw his arms around the latter's neck and said: "Well, we didn't get all we wanted, but we did pretty well, and we have enough left over for another campaign." A like affectionate greeting was given Senator Martin and others. "And you could have tied their smiles behind their ears," said a spectator afterwards.

Admittance to this basement room, by the way, represented practically the highest degree of confidence in a caller on the part of the governor. It was practically

equivalent to a clean bill of health, politically speaking, in administration eyes, and in addition a recognition of more than ordinary worth and consequence in the individual favored. The rooms at the executive office, it might be explained, permitted the grading of callers into classes corresponding to their consequence or worth in the eyes of the governor and his kitchen cabinet. The large outer office, or reception room, was open to all. Here was the office of the private secretary and the executive clerk, and here were met the newspaper men, politicians and all casual callers. Few stalwarts of consequence who had occasion to call ever got beyond this room. As governor, LaFollette discouraged the advances of such visitors, and was quite firm and formal, and sometimes quite frigid, to them. Save for one or two exceptions, he plainly did not care for these callers. He was determined that no wrong construction should be placed in the public mind on his attitude toward his political opponents. He early accepted the wisdom of avoiding the appearance of evil, which to many seemed anomalous or contradictory in a nature so decisive and unafraid.

To the right of this outer office were the governor's private offices. Callers who could satisfy Colonel Murphy or John Hannan that their missions justified the privilege were admitted to these rooms.

Were still greater privacy than the executive's own office desired recourse was had to the stenographers' room adjoining the outer office on the left, and to be invited there might be said to mark the attainment of the second degree in official favor.

But the basement retreat, which was reached by a spiral iron stair from the stenographers' room, was the *ne plus ultra* in administration esteem. With the exception of an occasional distinguished visitor from outside the state, only the truly elect ever attained this

station, only those who besides being thoroughly *en rapport* with the administration had a further reputation for political sagacity or could be expected to deliver the goods in their home localities, in other words men of weight and standing.

Of course there were exceptions to all these regulations in the form of a few privileged ones who felt free to enter any sanetum at any time, such as H. W. Chynoweth, Irvine Lenroot, General George E. Bryant and H. S. Comstock, but these might almost be regarded as part of the executive machinery of the state anyway.

It might be added that ranking in favor with a conference in this basement retreat was an invitation to the executive residence. Owing to the fact that LaFollette as governor found it necessary to do much of his work at home he could not give much time to visitors there, and a personal invitation to the executive residence was therefore a marked honor to the recipient.

It is characteristic of strong souls to be blind to ideas that do not originate in their own intense natures. Because of this failing, men of independent spirit are often led into unwise steps, but this does not alter the great fact. It is constitutional with positive characters and must be so expected to manifest itself. Such natures are likewise prone to be blind to any virtues in those who oppose them. In their relations with their fellows they treat upon the basis of "whoever is not wholly with me is against me."

This may be said to have been the touchstone by which LaFollette unconsciously tried his fellows, and on the whole it appears to be the wise rule to follow, at least for such as can bear much in the way of misunderstanding and opposition. He did not make the mistake characteristic of weak natures of seeking to placate his enemies. He rewarded his friends, but smote his foes. While, like the generality of leaders, he has been willing

to use all who would serve him, he has had small patience with such "reformers" and so-called progressives who, while loudly zealous on some propositions, have yet cautiously maintained "pipe-line" connections, so to speak, with some hostile interest, or, to change the figure, have never lost sight of a port to windward. And with a penetration subtler than most men's he has seldom overestimated the worth of such followers.

The workings of the so-called "LaFollette mind," by the way, was a subject that engaged the study of many political psychologists at the time and since. Amos P. Wilder, editor of the *State Journal*, often speculated upon it editorially. Many believe that LaFollette dictated and directed all acts and movements individually and collectively in his following. For a score of years, but more particularly since he went to Washington as United States senator, he has been painted on the stump and in a large part of the opposition press as sitting at his office in the national capital like some gigantic magician with diabolical intuition jerking the proper string at every contingency that required action on the part of his friends. "Taking orders from Washington," was the easy explanation too often advanced for the course of action pursued by his friends in Wisconsin, and he was thus made the vicarious sufferer for ten thousand sins of others. As a matter of fact, it is only occasionally that he has taken a hand in local contests and issues, so engrossed has he been with the larger national ones and personal and domestic demands. As Wilder once observed, the "LaFollette mind" was not confined to one small pompadour head. When a situation arose it required no direct connection with the central brain to determine the attitude to be taken by his followers. As if by some magic telepathy, they took their positions intuitively and seldom in a way inconsistent with the inherent genius of the cause.

The governor's energy seemed boundless. Said one of his friends at the time:

Science teaches us that power can be converted into speed, and velocity into power, and this seems to be exemplified in the intellectual processes of LaFollette. With the most of us when we acquire a surplusage of vitality and animal energy we go out and "work it off." We simply must burn it up, and do so by playing, fighting, carousing, or what not. It is a torture to be denied this privilege.

LaFollette, on the other hand, seemingly possesses a remarkable faculty of turning this overflow, through some subtle chemistry, into mental energy, and storing it up in his capacious nervous reservoir against the day of use. When this day arrives he proves himself a very battery of energy and can concentrate himself with crushing effect.

Who that has seen him at a social affair at his own house, for instance, and not marveled at the manifestation of nervous power exemplified in him! Feline alertness is perhaps the best comparison to this manifestation. He is seated bolt upright in his chair, perhaps smoking violently under the momentary excitement. His strong face and firm-set jaw fairly radiate intelligence and power. His eyes dance and pierce with dazzling animation. The fingers of his left hand drum the table hard and nervously. As someone tells a story he emphasizes the points with sharp and vivid grunts, more powerfully expressive than the story-teller himself. We said seated on his chair, but no, a lady appears at the door to say "good night," and he rises to his feet as by some electric, bird-like process which gives the feeling that he had not been seated at all, but had been merely touching his chair.

Unfortunately for romance, LaFollette was caught young and civilized. What a pirate or highwayman, what a red-handed ripper and raider might not this barrel of wildcats have made! What a swashbuckling Dumas hero! But, alas! he is civilized!

Under the pressure of other things, the governor's correspondence would pile up, much to the worry and dismay of his secretaries and clerks. When action finally became imperative they would literally drag him to his task. The baptism of work then given them would be not soon forgotten. Three or four stenographers would be called in and in relay fashion the governor would dictate to them with great rapidity for hours so

that several machines were kept constantly transcribing his words until the pile of letters before him had melted away.

He worked in like manner on his messages to the legislature—these remarkable state papers of Hamiltonian lucidity and logic were frequently prepared under similar distracting circumstances and pressure at the very last moment, frequently going to the houses with the ink of his signature upon them still undried.

In this connection an incident throwing an interesting sidelight upon LaFollette's nature may be cited. Following his second election as governor in the fall of 1902 some sympathetic old woman in the northern part of the state sent him a pair of thick woolen mittens, and with them a loving note of appreciation, stating that she had knit them herself and trusted that they might be of use to him. The governor was greatly moved at the receipt of them, but neglected to reply to the aged donor's letter. Weeks and months dragged by and still the letter remained unanswered. When reminded of the fact by his secretary, he would reply, "yes, some other time." Finally there came a rainy day when callers were few and he found the desired moment. Instead of going home to lunch he sat down to acknowledge the receipt and his appreciation of the gift. Over an hour was spent in its writing, in the course of which he took occasion to pay a tribute to his own mother and rehearse some of the privations she had undergone in pioneer days.

In respect to the attitude of the governor toward visitors at the time, however, there has been much disagreement. Many who sought interviews and conferences with him in the very nature of things had to be disappointed and therefore laid up against him the charge that he was shutting the door in the face of the people of the state. The marvel is that he found time to keep open

house to as many as he did. Men of LaFollette's magnetism, initiative and leadership when in positions of influence and power, are constantly beset by visitors, and LaFollette had more than his share of them. The place-seeker; the idly curious; the man "with a knife out" for someone; the man with an axe to grind; the individual who believed he had secrets and ideas of value; the eager lieutenant with new plans and reports; the agent seeking for a sale or the prestige of the governor's endorsement; the man who had known his father and wanted to sit down and talk an hour or two of old times; the woman after a son's or a husband's pardon; the upstate man who thought his railroad fare to Madison entitled him to a handshake and a chat—these, and the cloud of newspaper reporters always on his trail, were familiar figures at all hours of the day and night in the anteroom of the executive office.

To receive, entertain, amuse, placate and relieve all these heterogeneous elements and interests from morning until midnight, day after day, would seem a task to appal the stoutest. Yet this was, of course, merely incidental to the larger and really vital work of LaFollette.

The reform ideas which were consuming him with enthusiasm and which he determined to place upon the statute books he had to construct and develop largely alone. It was almost virgin ground which he had to break and in the breaking of which he had to uproot hoary stumps of prejudice and precedent and turn under a tenacious growth of traditions, political superstitions and practices.

Through ancient lies of proudest birth
He drove his share.

These largely experimental ideas he also had to make practical and effective, able to withstand the test of constitutionality—as in the main they have, and how admirably have they not withstood the test, a splendid tri-

bute to LaFollette's constructive statesmanship and strong good sense. And lastly, in addition to disseminating and nurturing the seeds of these ideas in the minds of an electorate not yet attuned to the new movement, he had to wage an unceasing warfare of self preservation against a powerful party rebellion and weld his own heterogeneous following—"General Bryant's miserable rabble"—into an effective fighting machine. In other words, he had to largely create the issues and create the army. What wonder that he could not please everyone who sought him?

LaFollette while governor set a shining example to other executives by dealing with conditions and men exactly as he found them. He wasted no time in repining. He thereby obtained results. This trait was strikingly shown in his campaigns. He had to "fight the devil with fire" and meet desperate and underhanded methods with the same practices. Questionable deals with both democrats and stalwarts had to be made to hold some vital point or capture some strategic position. The whole delegation of Door county was once won over by thus taking care of one man. It was a frequent experience to hear the telephone in the executive office ring and a voice call from somewhere far across the state where some critical convention was being held, saying:

Governor, So-and-So is kicking over the traces and promising to make all kinds of trouble. We have got to have him to win the day. What can we offer him?

Such were among the problems constantly presented to the resourceful executive for solution. Occasionally a bargain had to be closed with some disreputable individual whom no self-respecting man would in any other contingency deign to recognize. All volunteers were received and put into ranks wherever they would fit. With his field marshals it was the same. There was no squeamish scanning of their motives in coming in, nor

of their tactics in the field later. With the Neys, Junots and Bertrands, whose disinterested hearts and hands were given wholly to their general, were received also the self-seeking Bernadottes, Talleyrands and Moreaus. If they could but fight, no question was raised. It has been said that all great men are unscrupulous. Certain it is that hesitation at scruples has lost many battles and also has been the cause of many missing greatness.

The sharpest tactics were resorted to by each side to learn the plans of the other. One half-breed member of the lower house was particularly successful in "getting next" to the opposition, and through him the governor was able to know almost day by day the secrets and operations of the "enemy." A good fellow, himself, one of his most fruitful methods was to frequent the saloons where certain stalwarts were wont to gather of evenings and join them in a gentleman's round of conviviality. Knowing how liquor can loosen men's tongues, he would in due season skillfully draw out some now more confidential companion and obtain his desired information, occasionally finding it necessary to feign intoxication to do so. "Not very nice business," he would say, "but this is war."

To guard against possible leaks through them, newspapermen were sharply watched by both sides. Occasionally desperate and ingenious methods had to be employed by the press "gang" to obtain the news. On one occasion a Milwaukee sleuth succeeded one afternoon in slipping into an alcove of a room in which a conference was to be held in the evening and from this vantage point was able to get the desired story, even to the speeches made, although himself in total darkness. Another time one of them slipped out on a window sill of the capitol and waited an hour or two in the cold that he might get the story of another secret meeting. The surprise attending the revelations of performances thought

to be entirely secret can be best imagined. The Wisconsin legislative sessions of the opening of the century were thus rare schools for the training of real newspaper men.

Always to a degree an idealist himself, LaFollette recast the old rule and employed young men for counsel as well as for war. While preparing his first message to the legislature in 1901 he had Henry F. Cochems, then recently out of the university, "bury himself" (as he was directed) for several weeks in the state historical library and make a study of articles on current public questions of interest and prepare digests of them. Cochems was one of the wonder students of his day and had demonstrated an almost uncanny capacity for this sort of work. Owing to the fact that the tax commission did not have its report ready, it is said LaFollette had not intended to say anything about railroad taxation, but Cochems, after reading what Governor Pingree of Michigan was doing in the way of railroad reform urged LaFollette to not be silent on that point. Finding it impossible to get any figures from the tax commission, they called upon Halford E. Erickson, labor commissioner, and had him work out some tables which the governor incorporated into his message and which later called down much criticism because they did not fully correspond with those of the commission.

About this time also a thin-faced serious student from the east who had come to Wisconsin for a doctorate degree called on the governor and suggested the desirability of a legislative reference library to assist legislators in the drafting of bills, somewhat along the lines of a similar institution established for the British Parliament. It was pointed out by the eager and eloquent student that such library would not only be of great benefit in the way of bringing about intelligent scientific legislation, but would free the legislators from dependence upon

lobbyists, and corporation attorneys who had hitherto had so potent a hand in shaping legislation and to the interests of their employers. The student was Charles H. McCarthy. With a few blue books and other state publications he was installed in a little side room in the capitol, scarcely larger than an alcove. Thus was begun the now splendid legislative reference library, one of the boasts of Wisconsin, the first of its kind in this country, and which is now finding its counterpart in many other states, as it promises to soon be incorporated into the national legislative scheme.

Some of the difficulties with which the reform cause had to contend by the way may be obtained from a study of the political conditions in Walworth county at the time.

Walworth county became and remained a stronghold of stalwartism through a peculiar combination of circumstances, and illustrated in an illuminating way the connection between high finance and conservatism. Much the same story could be told of Marathon county, with its comparatively wealthy city of Wausau—the last stalwart stronghold to fall—and of a number of counties.

A particularly fertile region, Walworth county had been largely settled by a thrifty, conservative New England element. Many of the old families had become wealthy through simply maintaining their real estate holdings. Naturally during the LaFollette upheavals they made common cause with “big business” and frowned upon any disturbance of things as they were. Their fortunes in many cases were also involved with the big interests of the county.

From out the same county too had gone many men who had become prominently connected with great concerns in the business world and who exercised a conservative influence upon their relatives in the old home locality.

Lastly should be remembered the fact that large numbers of wealthy Chicago people had homes on Lake Geneva and at other desirable places in the county. These homes, of regal magnificence, costing individually upwards of a million dollars and whose very barns were appointed with hardwood floors, polished brass and Brussels carpets, tended to create an atmosphere of aristocracy and conservatism.

It is interesting to revert to the subject of the big stalwarts hailing from this county, and to see the intimate blood and business connections that bound them and their interests together. Thus out of Walworth county had come George R. Peek, a great lawyer and general counsel of the St. Paul railroad, as well as George C. Wiswall, for years the clever and effective lobbyist of the same road, and later John Harris, who after serving in both houses of the legislature, succeeded Wiswall as lobbyist. It may also be not amiss to note here that the Earling family—the directing heads of the same road—came from a nearby county.

From Walworth also came Edward Tilden of the Chicago beef trust, who was named in the Lorimer scandal and who won notoriety in this connection by his refusal to produce the books of the company. During the factional controversy in Wisconsin the *Delavan Republican* was edited by a brother-in-law of Tilden's.

Another product of Walworth and of the city of Elkhorn was Major A. J. Cheney, agent of the Webster dictionary company, who, with S. B. Todd of the American Book company, worked to bring about the renomination of L. D. Harvey for superintendent of public instruction in 1902; so also was A. E. Matheson, the prominent stalwart attorney of Janesville, law partner of Senator John M. Whitehead. Then there were local stalwart leaders of ability and influence, such as Z. P. Beach and E. D.

Coe of Whitewater and Henry Barnes of Elkhorn, for years county clerk.

Edward Tilden owned a fine fancy live stock farm near Delavan and was a frequent visitor there. Some years ago the Delavan high school building was destroyed by fire and when the new building was dedicated Edward Tilden was present as the "big man" of the occasion and made an address. It is said that he did not get beyond the grades while attending school in his native Delavan, yet here he came back, to his credit, as the president of the school board of the great city of Chicago. What wonder if he exercised some influence in the community?

A number of the big business interests of Elkhorn were understood to be enjoying valuable favors from the railroads in the form of rebates and special rates. In return for these favors they were expected to fight the LaFollette taxation program. The proximity of Elkhorn to Chicago and the intimate business relations existing between certain interests in the two cities made Elkhorn a natural channel for anti-LaFollette corporation money to find its way from Chicago into Wisconsin and it is said a great deal took this course, particularly in the 1910 senatorial campaign.

The First National Bank of Elkhorn was the fortress of stalwartism and to an extent dominated the business of the place. John Harris and Walter West of the creamery firm of Harris & West were heavy stockholders in this concern and both used their influence against LaFollette, the one being a stalwart republican, the other a stalwart democrat. Connected with them by business and blood ties was the creamery firm of Harris & Derthick at Waukesha. George Harris of this firm was the brother of John Harris of Elkhorn. Interested with them was Senator A. M. ("Long") Jones and T. E. Ryan, the democratic stalwart lawyer. An admirable

illustration of the ramification of stalwart relationship is thus furnished in this case.

It was against such powerful forces and influences that the young and disinterested republicanism of old Walworth had to long contest before effecting the change that was finally to come.

It may be added, perhaps, that from the beginning the reform program proposed by LaFollette received the support of organized labor as well as that of the farmers. Railroad workers were not then so well organized as at present and, as organizations, took no hand in politics, but the rank and file, as individuals, were on the side of the new movement. A recent letter to Senator LaFollette from one J. E. Hamman, then manager of the Michigan state fair, may be cited as illustrative of this fact. Writing from Detroit, May 23, 1911, he said:

I do not know as you remember the writer, but you had a case against the Northwestern Railway Company for me when I was firing a locomotive for that company. If you remember, you did not charge me a cent for your services in settling the case, and said that you were running for governor, and that if I could say a word to some of the railroad men, for you, I might. I do not believe I missed an opportunity to relate your action in the matter, and whether it did any good or not, I do not know, but I hope and believe it did.

CHAPTER XIX

Reading of Freight Rates.

GOVERNOR EARLY IN LECTURE FIELD AFTER SESSION—CREATES SENSATION BY CHARGING BRIBERY IN SESSION OF 1901—SOUNDS FIRST "HIGH-COST-OF-LIVING" NOTE IN LABOR DAY ADDRESS—ANOTHER COUNTY FAIR CAMPAIGN—SUBSTITUTES READING OF FREIGHT RATES FOR ROLL CALL.

ORDINARILY, for a year following a legislative session, times are "dull," politically speaking, in a state. Periods of excitement are followed by corresponding periods of lassitude on the part of the public and frequently a forward movement is followed by one of reaction in which all the advanced ground taken is lost. It is one of the lessons of history, emphasizing the importance of eternal vigilance. But Wisconsin was not permitted to afford such illustration during the LaFollette regime. For a decade the state was to be practically a political armed camp. The teeming brain, the tireless energy and the unwearied will of LaFollette permitted of no cessation in his eager crusade.

Scarcely had the session of 1903 closed with its drawn battles before the governor was again stirring his propagandist leaven and giving new concern to the opposition by indications that he would again lead his forces in person, even in the face of the third-term precedent for no one but military-hero governors.

Early in the summer he accepted an invitation to speak at the assembly at Lake Chautauqua, N. Y., and there gave a strong and vigorous address, setting forth his doctrines and reciting his experiences in his own state. The legislative contest in Wisconsin had attracted attention far beyond the state and this address was

awaited with much interest as the keynote of his next campaign, if one was to follow.

The governor's first word in Wisconsin, following the session, was spoken at the Monona Lake Assembly at Madison, July 30, a strong and exhaustive address dealing with the legislative and political situation in the state. In this address he created a state sensation by charging that legislation was defeated in the session of 1901 through bribery and that the attempted use of money was "susceptible of proof." A great protest was raised in the stalwart press over the speech, with a mighty demand upon the governor to "produce the proof." The *Wisconsin State Journal* treated the address with ridicule, saying in part:

Then Mr. Chynoweth (who introduced the governor) threw a tremor in his voice as he referred to "Representative Government." "He stands for it," said he (suggestion of applause from some families who had driven in;) "he believes in it"; (gathering volume of applause); "he has sacrificed himself for it"; (a man from Paoli cried "Hooray" at this point); "he has done much" and (in a voice full of significance) "he will do more."

At this some honest country people who thought they detected in Mr. Chynoweth a true son of the soil clapped their hands to beat the band, and all the time the governor looked sadly on the earth. It recalled Abraham Lincoln looking out thoughtfully on the Potomac at midnight during the worst stress of the civil war—the patient burden-bearer of the people.

It soon appeared that it was the same old speech beginning, "The basic principle, etc."

Of this *State Journal* story the *Milwaukee Free Press* said:

Dr. Amos P. Wilder, editor of the *State Journal*, sat and chatted with Senator John M. Whitehead through the speech. A *State Journal* reporter, George Perham of Racine, wrote a faithful report of the meeting, giving the governor credit for making a notable address. This report was glanced at by "Dr." Wilder and he immediately "threw a fit." "This won't do, Perham. Neva' do. I'll touch this off myself," said "Dr." Wilder, or something to that effect, and he wrote the purported humorous report of the speech which appeared in the evening Madison paper.

This account the *State Journal* followed with an editorial entitled, "Peanuts and Hysterics." Typical of the stalwart tone of the time, a portion of it may be reproduced:

We say to the Lakeside audience which listened to the smooth and insidious scandal-mongering of this French wizard that we would in preference trust our last dollar or dearest interest with any of the men mentioned above—rascals all, according to LaFollette's reasoning. * * *

We for one protest. The men of Wisconsin will never get more faithful, honest, loyal representatives in the senate than some of these men LaFollette attempted in his Lakeside speech to pass off as "corporation hirelings." It was his most daring feat of oratorical deception; the districts in which these libeled senators and assemblymen live and where they are known must be amazed and disgusted.

This is a delirium that will soon pass away. An era of sense and justice must return. Wisconsin has had enough of LaFolletteism. Surely, all real reform is not done by black-haired orators who practice elocution before the groundlings until calm deliberations of skilled, sensible but plain-talking men seem foolishness. * * * Even the mysteries of Herrman and Keller will not stand indefinite exploitation. How much longer will Governor Bob's awful warnings, genial arm rubs and secret negotiations stand the wear and tear of publicity and familiar use? * * *

We, for one, are sick of fireworks, of dramatics, of sleight-of-hand. We hunger and thirst for something genuine and real. We long for the re-enthronement of a governor in this state on whom one may call on public business without first the scenes being set, the red fire being made ready, the electric shock machine charged for the country trade. We are tired of the monarchy of one-man power without even a nobility in the second rank.

The closing sentence of this editorial serves to recall that one of the general complaints with reference to the governor was his strong and constant insistence upon his own views and plans. This characteristic is, however, common to true reformers. They see but the goal, and whatever stands in the way must be sacrificed. It proves the zeal and qualities of firmness essential to succeed. On this point the *Chicago Tribune* said:

He was ambitious to have Wisconsin control its railways and to be the man to cause Wisconsin to control the railways. He wanted to have it done and he wanted to do it himself. This is his main fault. He wanted to do it himself. He would rather do it himself than have anybody else do it. Out of such faults are successful, effective statesmen made.

Invited to give the labor day address at Beloit, the governor precipitated another storm of criticism by declaring in his discussion of the trust question that in the past six years the wages of factory workers in Wisconsin had increased on the whole only about ten per cent, while the cost of living had increased about twenty-seven per cent in the same time. It was practically the first public sounding of the "high-cost-of-living" note later to be so familiar and the governor was roundly abused for thus stirring up a feeling of discontent calculated to follow such statements, particularly since Beloit had just passed through the experience of a big labor strike. Under the editorial caption, "A Dangerous Man," the *Milwaukee Sentinel* denounced the governor roundly for his "incendiary" practices. A long discussion followed in the state press over the correctness of the governor's statements, with Carroll D. Wright, the government statistician, being liberally quoted on both sides.

Although this was not a campaign year so great was the feeling caused by the governor's address that Senator John M. Whitehead, the stalwart leader, replied to it in a speech at Beloit two weeks later, in the course of which address he made the interesting statement, among others, that the stalwarts had succeeded in organizing the senate in 1901 by making Senator McGillivray president pro tem in return for support for Senator "Long" Jones, stalwart, for caucus chairman. Jones had accordingly been elected and the senate committees were organized as the stalwarts desired. McGillivray, by the way, entered vigorous denial of the Whitehead statement which brought other senators into the controversy, among them

W. H. Hatton of New London, who said Whitehead was in the main correct.

McGillivray, by the way, was one of the picturesque characters of the LaFollette legislatures, an ardent, aggressive supporter of the governor during his first years of service, but later one of his most vigorous opponents. With a certain fluency of speech and dramatic fervency, he combined a voice of remarkable volume. As the mountaineers of Kentucky and Tennessee can tell their neighbors for miles around by the reports of their guns, so their fellow legislators frequently needed but to enter the corridors of the capitol to know that McGillivray or Senator Hudnall had the floor.

One morning on coming to the statehouse during the session following the capitol fire the legislators were surprised to find a great network of ropes completely surrounding the building. These had been stretched in the early morning under direction of McGillivray to show the outlines of the new capitol of which he had proposed the building. "McGillivray's rope capitol" thus furnished much material for pleasantry among the politicians.

Governor LaFollette did not charge wholesale bribery in the legislature, but he drove home the point that, as in mathematics, things equal to the same thing are equal to each other; so the men who through political spite, or jealousy or sympathy, or whatever the motive, voted to ends and effects sought by bribery were equally guilty and dangerous, though not purchased, with the men actually bribed.

Many of the incidents related here and elsewhere in this work may seem trivial or unimportant at this time, but it is the testimony of biographers and historians that nothing having to do with unusual characters of history can be said to be without possible interest to succeeding generations.

The value of this attempted historical treatment of the times so soon after their close also may be questioned by many. Nearness usually makes a true perspective difficult. Yet for the particular purposes of this work it was begun none too soon. Much of the material herein contained could not be gathered today, so rapidly have death, removals, excitements of succeeding campaigns, changes of affiliation, and other factors, transformed conditions and obscured or obliterated the sources of original information. The dry legislative records, giving no word of debate, nor even the names of contending partisans, contain scarcely the slightest hint of the storms that have swayed the legislative chambers of the capitol or the significance of the political currents of the period. Save then for the aid of a contemporary press the historian of the remoter future would find but a meager reflection of the human phases of any state legislative period. But much beneath the surface of passing events escapes the press, nor is the press primarily interested in the continuity or philosophy of contemporary social phenomena. The historian of the future is thus placed under obligations to the contemporary gleaner who preserves, without presuming at too much discrimination, all available historical material, the seemingly ephemeral and substantial alike, until the enduring elements of all can be determined and given proper place in the structure of a people's story.

A round of county fair speeches by the governor followed, in the month of September, speeches of more than ordinary interest from the standpoint of political practices because of the employment of a new factor in Wisconsin campaigning, the so-called reading of the freight rates. A political writer has said that LaFollette displayed a quality nothing short of genius when he turned the simple reading of the roll call into an effective political weapon. The ability to rouse and maintain the

interest of audience after audience in the reading of long and formidable tables of freight rates, however, seems a far more remarkable achievement, yet this was largely the agency through which the governor pressed on to another victory. The plan adopted was to present at each point where he spoke the freight rates applicable to that point and then compare them with the rates equidistant from Chicago or other points in Illinois and Iowa to prove that Wisconsin paid higher rates.

Speeches of this character were delivered at Plymouth, Appleton, Eau Claire, Madison, Evansville, Antigo, Rhinelander, LaCrosse, Chippewa Falls, and other places and proved a successful experiment. Ordinarily, statistics and figures are repellent to an audience, but in these instances the interest of the hearers was held in spite of them. The governor had an orator's trick of making even statistics musical. The significance of figures lies in their highest denomination—hence he would shout "Fifteen million," for instance, and give the remainder "three hundred thirty-five thousand, two hundred fifty-seven dollars and fifteen cents," in a rapid liquid diminuendo, which not infrequently raised a laugh.

But it was not from the political platform alone that LaFollette gave his attention to the railroads. At the legislative session of 1903 a law had been enacted providing for an examination by the railroad commissioner into the books and accounts of the railroad companies to ascertain if the railroads had been reporting the full amount of their returns on which they paid license fees to the state. While this work was in progress Governor LaFollette, on February 10, 1904, directed Railroad Commissioner Thomas, in connection with his investigation into the subject of back taxes, to report the names of all persons to whom the railroads under investigation had issued passes in 1903 and during January and February,

1904. It might be remarked here that in spite of the legislation of 1899 the railroad pass died hard. Many persons continued to obtain and use it through one subterfuge or another. When, therefore, the governor directed the investigation toward the subject of passes he placed his finger upon a tender spot. And it may here be said that the state did not obtain the names—except from some of the smaller roads—as it had not then the specific authority to force the information. Whether or not the larger roads had agreed to refuse the request of the state is not known. President Hughitt of the Chicago & Northwestern road stated that he was willing to give the desired information for his road providing the other roads would do likewise. President Earling of the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul road, however, was obdurate. On March 23, 1904, he addressed a communication of some length to Commissioner Thomas in which he exchanged legal thrusts with the governor. Governor LaFollette had declared that such information was pertinent to the inquiry to determine if the railroads had reported fully the gross earnings on which they were paying a four per cent license fee. President Earling said that the law required the railroad commissioner to report to the state treasurer the total “gross receipts” of the roads, but that passes, mileage books, etc., could not be considered as earnings. He held that the names of persons to whom passes had been issued were “obviously irrelevant to any legitimate inquiry.” He was willing to aid in reporting gross earnings, “but your present request at the demand of the governor,” he said, “is so clearly improper that I must respectfully decline to comply therewith.” The “Soo” officials presented the list of passes given by their road, but refused to permit any record to be made of them, holding there had been no violation of the law as none had been issued to public officials or candidates, the only ones receiving them being officials and employes of the road.

The state finally abandoned the attempt to obtain this information, but in the legislative session of 1905 a law was enacted requiring all railroads to file their lists of passes with the state. Other legislation making clearer the law also was enacted.

With the pass, by the way, another cherished institution was to be consigned to the limbo of things that were during the LaFollette regime. This was the newspaper mileage book. Previous to LaFollette's time the railroads had been liberal to newspaper men and their families, who were generally able to ride "free," not only within the state, but throughout the whole country. Editorial junketing trips, not only individually, but in parties, to Florida, California or New York, were a general and genteel privilege of the craft. Of course the newspapers in return carried time tables and other advertising of the roads "free" and generally conserved the interests of the roads otherwise.

With the enactment of anti-pass legislation the LaFollette administration took the position that consistency demanded that advertising be recognized as an expense item and that transportation issued therefor could not be withheld in statements of gross earnings. Commissioner Thomas reported that in the seven years between 1897 and 1904 the railroads had issued \$986,728 worth of transportation in Wisconsin, which under the four per cent license fee should have brought into the state treasury \$39,469.12 in taxes. Under the new ruling the railroads were obliged to pay for their advertising and the newspaper men to pay for their rides; the cherished advertising mileage book disappeared and the tears of editorial households were long undried.

Naturally these addresses were not without incident. At the Dane county fair at Madison where the governor spoke September 3, Madison stalwarts attempted to create prejudice against him by secretly flooding

the grounds before he spoke with anonymous circulars headed "Governor LaFollette's Reforms." The circulars contained cartoons and newspaper clippings, recited the school book charges and other political history and advised his hearers to "make a note of his figures, remember the names of the men he denounces and look up the records yourself." A warning shot was given the governor in conclusion by quoting Lincoln's words, "You can fool some of the people all of the time," etc.

The governor spoke from a wagon standing in a broiling sun. He was introduced by S. L. Sheldon, president of the Dane County Agricultural Society, who, however, appeared to have temporarily forgotten the name of his famous townsman and near neighbor, so that it became necessary for a bystander to audibly inform him that the name of Wisconsin's executive was "LaFollette." Here also formidable statistical tables were read.

Commenting on the speech the *State Journal* said: "The crowd was slim and the applause thin. The spell is broken in Dane county."

With the public mind so inflamed there were naturally sharp divisions in certain county fair directorates over the question of inviting the governor to speak. The stalwart press said the governor and his men forced themselves upon fair managements, and it denounced the practice of mixing the exhibits with politics, saying it would prove destructive to the fairs, although the governor was a strong drawing card. Especially was there protest against inviting him to the interstate fair at LaCrosse. This meeting, where he spoke to ten thousand people, had a number of incidents. The governor was met at the station by a brass band and a big delegation of prominent citizens and fair officials. As the parade set out for the fair grounds a carriage containing Postmaster E. W. Keyes and family of Madison swung in from a side street in front of it. The judge thus finding himself heading the parade ordered his driver to whip

up the horses, but the animals were already tired and as the carriages behind were hurrying to get the governor to the grounds on time the judge's driver made no gain. Here then the grand old man of Wisconsin stalwartism found himself leading a Roman holiday procession in honor of LaFollette with a brass band in full blast behind him. Block after block they went with no chance to escape. When they finally arrived at the fair ground gates the judge relinquished the advantage of immediate admission and drove to one side, preferring to take the dust of the half breeds to continue leading the procession into the grounds.

There were many interruptions at this meeting. Once when the governor declared there was no politics in railway regulation someone in the crowd called out:

"Oh, yes, there is."

"Well, not to me," replied the governor. "No campaign will end this so far as I am concerned so long as I have breath left in my body."

Again something of a stir was produced when the governor read a letter sent him by a United States senator saying it was impossible to enlarge the powers of the interstate commerce commission because the railroads owned too many United States senators.

From LaCrosse Governor LaFollette transferred to Cedar Rapids, Iowa, to speak in the evening at a Methodist conference. In his merciless arraignment at this meeting of recreant public officials the governor occasionally drew forth a fervent "amen." The next day he was sharply criticized in the stalwart press for thus playing on the credulity and feelings of long-whiskered, innocent old men and inviting nervous breakdown on their part.

Thus drew toward its close the memorable year of 1903 with the issues clarifying and the battle lines forming for the great final struggle between the old and the new orders which all recognized was impending.

CHAPTER XX

The Decisive Year of 1904.

ANNUS MIRABILIS IN STATE HISTORY—CAMPAIGN THAT DETERMINED ISSUE OF POPULAR GOVERNMENT IN WISCONSIN—"LaFOLLETTEISM" OVERSHADOWS ALL OTHER QUESTIONS—STALWART LACK OF LEADERSHIP—BAENSCH ANNOUNCES CANDIDACY—EARLY INCIDENTS OF YEAR—BARBER-STURTEVANT LETTERS—BURNING OF CAPITOL—ADMINISTRATION SEEKS DEFEAT OF CONGRESSMAN BABCOCK—SIGNIFICANT SUPREME COURT ELECTION.

IN WISCONSIN political history the year 1904 stands as the annus mirabilis. It was to mark the "farthest north" of the later confederacy opposed to the new movement and determined to maintain its privileges. In the intensity of the passions aroused, in desperate, relentless, dramatic warfare no other campaign in the state's history approximates this one. For a year preceeding its close dramatic events trod one another's heels. The entire state was rent in twain and every political party disrupted over the burning issue of "LaFolletteism." It has been estimated that a half million dollars was spent in the state in that period for the defeat of LaFollette. That the sum was something enormous is generally admitted. According to the admission of a sworn witness, the Hill interests of Minnesota alone sent many men into the state to help in the fight upon the governor. In the great battle waged that year was finally settled the issue of popular government in Wisconsin. Reforms have come easily since the way was then blazed through fire and blood, as it were, to ultimate victory. A governor's message with a score of propositions, any one of which ten years ago would have raised a storm of protest and denunciation, now creates scarcely a ripple in the public mind.

In fact it may almost be said that there has been no "politics" in Wisconsin since this memorable campaign. While at times there has been no little apparent excitement it has been largely of a manufactured character; the interested politicians, not the people, have been exercised. There has been no stirring of the depths of the electorate. This is indicated by a study of the votes cast in the elections of the past decade and a half. The official total vote on governor in the successive elections during that period follows:

VOTE ON GOVERNOR

1900		440,897
1902		365,643
1904		449,560
1906		319,746
1908		449,677
1910		319,462
1912		393,651
1914		325,430

It will thus be seen that in only one election, that of the presidential year of 1908, has the vote of 1904 been exceeded, and then only by the paltry excess of 117. On the other hand, the population of the state increased 264,818 in the decade from 1900 to 1910, the total in 1900 being 2,069,042 and in 1910, 2,333,860. At the same rate of growth the increase in population from 1900 to 1915 would be about 462,000. At the generally accepted average of one voter in every five of population this increase should have added 92,400 to the voting strength of the state. In round numbers the voting loss from 1900 to 1914 was 115,000. If to this be added the 92,400 new votes the stay-at-home vote in 1914 will be found to have been over 178,000.

The story of the great fight of 1904 has been told over and over again, in newspaper and magazine articles, in

briefs of attorneys and in hundreds of pages of testimony and affidavits before courts and political committees—the legal proceedings alone covering over 1,200 pages—yet many interesting phases and incidents of it have never been recorded.

Had LaFollette, in observance of precedents, retired at the end of his second term his long ten-year fight might have been largely for naught. The primary bill had been passed, but there was a possibility of its defeat at the polls; the rate commission and maximum freight bills had been killed; the ad valorem bill had been enacted, but there was no bar to an increase of rates to defeat the ends of the law. In a new governor and a new legislature the opposition saw a possibility of defeating all LaFollette's agitations.

It was the determination of the governor again to be a candidate that made inevitable the mighty struggle of that year. It was a critical time for LaFollette, following the adjournment of the legislature in 1903. He fully realized the great fight that would be waged against him in case he sought a third term. He knew that his enemies would make much of the fact that it would be the sixth time he was making a bid for the nomination and the fifth time for himself, and would urge that it was "time he took a back seat and gave someone else a chance." While unable to prevent his nomination in 1900 and again in 1902, they had succeeded in so far defeating most of the measures which he had championed. They now expected to see him retire from the field and cease to be a thorn in their sides. That done, they believed they could continue to hold the legislature, prevent the enactment of any more of his agitations and if he could be barred from the seat in the United States senate held by Joseph V. Quarles, to which it was suspected he aspired, it was thought he might be made a political "back number" for years. To that end a supreme effort

was now determined upon for the retention of Quarles and the election of a governor and legislature that would be "safe." The two-term precedent it was felt would be a difficult argument to meet. Truc, Governors Fairchild and Rusk had each been elected a third term, but they were popular idols, old soldiers with peculiar elements of popularity. No one else had ever had the temerity to ask for a third term and there had hitherto been practically no third term sentiment or precedent.

But with characteristic blindness the opposition had simply paved the way for LaFollette's continued advancement. Had his opponents permitted the enactment of the measures which he urged LaFollette probably would have retired at the end of his second term and in two years of retirement to private life might have lost much of his prestige and weakened his chances for the senate. As it was, they simply gave him a new issue with which to remain before the people, and LaFollette was shrewd enough to know that nothing succeeds before an electorate like an issue. It had always been his line of battle. When storms had raged the fiercest about his head, when ridicule, vituperation and charges of official misconduct filled the press and flew the thickest around him, he, to the wonder of many, seldom descended to notice or explain them, scarcely ever interjected a personality, but rather held clear-eyed to the issue in hand and pressed it relentlessly home. This course proved his political sagacity. It had not only the effect of magnifying his own issue, but left the charges of his enemies, undignified by notice, to wither and be buried in the flow of his argument. His had always been a positive campaign; that of his enemies too often a negative. They had not the wisdom to meet issue with counter-issue.

So again it was given LaFollette to astound his enemies by doing the unexpected, by taking the course they neither expected nor desired him to follow. He may not

himself have anticipated that out of his very defeat he was to snatch a greater victory than any earlier success could have given him. There was, however, but one consistent course now open. He had set out with the zeal of a Jesuit, with a definite end in view, that of writing upon the statute books of the state certain reforms which in his clear vision he saw the interests of the whole people demanded. In the main these had so far been defeated. To abandon them now would not only have been the highest cowardice, but a confession of defeat, a desertion and betrayal of the people, perhaps the digging of his own political grave. A smaller or weaker man would have yielded the fight to other hands, given over to the compromises or overtures of the enemy or feathered his own nest with some lucrative, if more obscure, position.

Conscious of the fact that the third-term idea was not popular, it was yet realized by the governor that he far more than any other man was the incarnation of his principles; it was essential to their success that he again be a candidate; he alone had the courage, the resourcefulness, the prestige, the popularity, to carry them through to success. Furthermore, he had, so far, largely failed and he was not of the mettle to turn his hand from the plow and ingloriously surrender the principles for which he and his element of the party had so long contended. It was equally necessary that a legislature of the right kind be elected. All things conspired to make plain that the line of duty and expediency was to continue the fight so well begun and make another appeal to the people.

But, as has been said, the governor and his friends realized the great crisis ahead and the great odds they would have to meet. This would be the final and the greatest effort of the opposition to unhorse him. Not only would the great bulk of the wealth of the state be

thrown in the balance against him, but the railroads would turn in with their enormous power. The metropolitan press, almost without exception, was on "the other side" and many of the smaller papers of the state remained true to the stalwart subsidy. Many friends, too, would doubtless weary of the long fight and take a passive, if not hostile, stand relative to its continuance. Finally, there was the powerful influence of the federal machine, with two United States senators, several congressmen, and an army of five thousand federal employes of the state, postmasters, revenue collectors, court officials, etc., nearly all of whom would take the field actively against him, as they had been picked for years with the end in view of building up an organization that would destroy that of the governor. It was a combination to daunt any but the stoutest heart. LaFollette had little behind him but his burning faith and his clarion voice. He had the prophetic vision, however, to see that an awakening was impending in America, in bringing about which he was to prove one of the most potential pioneers. The people were rising to a new conception, and a new exercise of their political prerogatives. As if paraphrasing the old saying relative to the making of the laws and the songs of a nation, he cared not what course the opposition followed if he could but gain the ear of the common people. He realized that for every one in purple and fine linen arrayed against him there were ten sons of Martha serving with their hands, and if of meaner clay they were yet presumably made in the image of God and guaranteed under the constitution an equal right at the polls with the most imperious beneficiary of privilege. He had faith that the ten would sustain him if they could be made to see the light and were given a free hand. To borrow a later phrase, "his faith in the hewers of wood and drawers of water was elemental."

Yet, many of his good friends sought to dissuade the governor. They pointed out what a campaign of education was imperative to success. "Besides, all the money in the state is against us," said one timid follower, "and we, as usual, have nothing."

"Oh, no, it isn't all against us," replied the hopeful governor; "there are lots of honest wealthy men who will be with us, as you will see. Besides, what haven't we done in the past without money? That should be an earnest for the future. You know there is nothing that will put a man on his mettle like playing poker short of cash."

The administration was not long in determining upon its course. Its extraordinary forehandedness is seen in the fact that as early as August 7, 1903, the writer of this work printed an inspired newspaper story to the effect that Governor LaFollette had already planned a comprehensive coup for the following year which included his candidacy for a third term, the holding of the next state convention in May—two months earlier than usual, and again in Madison,—and the holding of caucuses for the election of delegates as early as Febru-

PROMINENT FIGURES IN CAMPAIGNS 1900-04



AMOS P. WILDER



GEO. W. PECK



P. L. SPOONER

ary. Party precedent was to be further overturned by combining in one convention the nomination of candidates for state offices and the election of delegates to the national convention. It is interesting to note that this was the identical program later carried out. The article follows:

TO CAPTURE STATE DELEGATION NEXT

THIS THE END NOW SOUGHT BY THE ADMINISTRATION

EARLY STATE CONVENTION IS PLANNED

May Be Held in May and Again in Madison That the Governor
May Have Freer Hand in Directing Proceedings—Gumshoe
People Not Making Much Noise but Quietly Working.

Governor LaFollette is not going to take a rest. He is now on a round of Chautauqua addresses throughout the country which will take him as far east as Maryland and on his return will start on a series of county fair talks, speaking in every section throughout the state.

That he has planned a gigantic coup for next year is not to be doubted. The plan now under consideration, said a prominent half breed in the capitol, is the capture of the state delegation to the national convention next year, thus depriving the stalwarts of the prestige such victory would give them. Each congressional district will send two delegates, and it is probable that these will be elected in *January or February*. This will be the first test of strength. Then it is planned to elect the four at large from the state at the *same time* the state officers are nominated. To this end the state convention is to be held earlier than usual, *probably in May*, and *again in Madison* that the governor may have a freer hand in dominating the gathering. The governor *is to be a candidate* again and while many are urging him to contest the seat of Senator Quarles, the majority of his friends want to see him elected governor again, and his reforms inaugurated, if possible, leaving the senatorship *to the future*.

In the same issue of August 7, 1903, the *State Journal* under the editorial caption "Let's Fight With Clubs" had declared aggressive war on LaFollette's new designs, saying:

The *Sentinel* is said to be operated on the principle that it is a mistake to advertise LaFollette too much. This theory should be discarded at once. Governor Bob has passed the point where he fears neglect. The only way to dislodge him is to take him by the rhetorical seat of the pants and throw him down hard. Make it clear that he fattens on trouble. Every man with a dollar saved, with a business, a home paid for, a farm part paid for, should beware the success of LaFolletteism. The iron has entered his soul and prosperity acts on him like a red rag on a bull.

A great weakness of the stalwart cause was its lack of able, inspiring leadership. In this respect it contrasted pitifully with the movement led by the magnetic LaFollette. Especially was it lacking in available candidates for public favor to pit against the aggressive governor.

The leaders finally came to a sort of agreement upon Judge Emil Baensch of Manitowoc for the candidate for governor in the coming campaign. Baensch was a German-American editor, honest, of high abilities, but lacking in needed qualities of leadership. He had served a term as lieutenant governor. His political weakness at this stressful time when all red-blooded thinking men were taking positions was revealed in the fact that he was heralded as a non-factionalist, free from any embarrassing alliances. He was to be a "harmony" candidate and as early as December 10, 1903, he announced his candidacy with the plea: "Let us have a new alignment that will stamp out factionalism. There are no irreconcilable differences. Our greatest concern today should be the unification of the party."

Former Congressman Samuel A. Cook of Neenah, also soon entered the field as a "harmony" candidate, but the general feeling was that the Baensch and Cook forces would eventually unite. Cook was a wealthy lumberman, a self-made man with many attractive qualities, but not fitted to lead an aggressive fight.

The defeat of the governor was to be brought about, if possible, through the canenses. Hence, it was deter-

mined to organize every county against him. To carry out this elaborate campaign a committee of seven was announced by Judge Baensch January 14. Heading this committee was Philip L. Spooner of Madison, brother of Senator Spooner; the other members being S. A. Peterson of Rice Lake, former state treasurer; G. B. Clementson of Lancaster, S. F. Mayer of West Bend, C. E. Brady of Manitowoc, Otis W. Johnson of Racine, J. B. Treat of Monroe, M. B. Rosenberry of Wausau, J. L. Sturtevant of Waupaca and H. H. Morgan of Madison. A sub-committee of three, headed by Mr. Spooner, was directed to open headquarters and establish a base of supplies in Madison. Office rooms were engaged in the Vroman block, a choice stock of cigars and Philipp's "Red Book" on the railroads laid in and a corps of clerks and stenographers set to work.

A university student, Ralph B. Ellis, was engaged at \$20 per week to furnish syndicate pictorial lampoons of the governor and did so well that orders were once actually sent out to stop the presses and throw out a cartoon representing Governor LaFollette, with diabolical countenance, sticking a dirk under the fifth rib of "Miss Forward" (Wisconsin). It was feared this was "too strong" and would react to the governor's advantage. The literary end of the committee was Mr. Sturtevant, then editor of a weekly paper at Waupaca. Like most of the leading opponents of LaFollette, he was not a native of the state and had lived in it but a few years, so knew little of its traditions and temper. The dangers of LaFolletteism, it was said, had dawned upon him about the time of the formation of the so-called "eleventh story league."

The new dispensation to oppressed mankind, remarked a wag at the time, was not to suffer the handicap of the Koran of Mahomet in having to be first transcribed on the shoulder blades of sheep. No, it was to have an up-

to-date organ, a daily newspaper printed on a revolving press; the only press of its kind in the city, and capable of such speed that when let out to its full coltish limit it would run off the full edition of the paper before it could be stopped. This new official organ was the *Wisconsin State Journal* at Madison.

For \$1,800 the committee was to have free swing in its columns until the caucuses in Dane county were all over. Old Dane was to be the great strategic prize. If that could be taken from under the governor it was believed many other counties would fall in line and repudiate the prophet without honor at home.

The sudden and aggressive activity of the *State Journal* at this time led the administration to issue an eight-page pamphlet entitled "Mr. Wilder as a Plain Republican and Dr. Wilder as a Stalwart," for which publication Charles G. Riley of Madison stood sponsor. The pamphlet was on the "deadly parallel" order in which the *State Journal's* earlier endorsement and laudation of LaFollette's appointments and course in general, "before the great change came upon it," were pitted against its later denunciations of the same things. Through this pamphlet an editorial from Dr. Wilder's pen returned to plague him sorely, as he had feared it might. The editorial, which appeared in the *State Journal* in September, 1903, cast an interesting light on the political situation and read in part as follows:

The policy of this paper was changed in a day. . . . For a year we stood off the giants of the party. They climbed the stairs in all the moods of tempestuous nature. They swore and threatened and pleaded and offered us things we needed sorely. Monahan wanted to talk it over; Hughitt wrote (Hughitt was president of the Chicago & Northwestern Railroad company); Unele Hod wrote with cold steel pen and shunned euphonisms; Harry Morgan, Ray Frazier and the younger generation didn't want to interfere with the conduct of the paper, but "would suggest," and Judge Keyes said things in a spirited way and rapped his cane

upon the floor. Underground connections were made with Washington and no stone was left unturned to unhorse the present management.

This editorial, by the way, had been written weeks before it was printed and was read by the editor to certain members of his staff. "I am afraid to print it though," said Dr. Wilder. However, he was proud of its literary strength and cleverness and one day in a moment of abandon he ordered it to run. Lord Beaconsfield once declared that he wrote a drama simply to lay the ghost of a story that was haunting him. The drama failing the ghost was laid. For a similar reason, no doubt, this editorial was printed, but the literary ghost in this instance was not to be kept down. Of the editorial Mr. Riley said in part:

The *Journal* editor finally yielded although he does not tell us just what it was that did the business. We are left to conjecture whether it was the vigorous rapping of Keyes' cane or something in the letter that Hughitt wrote. Perhaps the learned doctor concluded to take the "things" which were "offered" him and which he "sorely needed." Whatever it was Wilder "before taking" and Wilder "after taking" printed in parallel columns would make interesting reading.

Dr. Wilder himself never gave the reason for his "great change," but once intimated that it followed the spending of an evening at the executive residence.

The Dane county committee having set the early date of April 18 for Dane county, fell in nicely with the stalwart plans, as most of the caueuses would be held later. The committee demurred a little at paying \$1,800. It was quite a sum for just one county and of course there would be a thousand other hoppers that would have to be filled. But the editor was a shrewd and obdurate Yankee. He would have liked to further the great cause gratuitously, he said, but he and the paper were both desperately hard up. Like Oxford, the paper had long been the home of lost causes, unpopular names and impossible loyalties, and had suffered accordingly. He might as well, he

said afterwards, have screwed his price up a few notches higher. The *State Journal* was also the official state paper at the time—the administration being obliged to promulgate through its columns everything of an official character. It thus, humorously enough, became a sort of organ of both the administration and the opposition and drew tribute from each, a playing of both ends against the middle, which brought the usual embarrassment. A number of desperate efforts by the administration to deprive it of its official pap, and even more desperate efforts by the paper to retain it, were among the not unamusing incidents of the administrations of the period.

It was finally agreed that for the caucus campaign the paper was to have \$1,800, but was to pay Martin W. Odland, a young writer friendly to the league, \$20 a week to go about the county and write up the towns and villages. Every family in the county was put on the free list while the pre-caucus campaign was on and was given such an education in anti-LaFolletteism as the local annals of partisanship had seldom known. However, so far as Dane county was concerned, the elaborate house of cards so solicitously built was to fall. An obstinate electorate, charged with refusing to see the light, was to return but dust and ashes for all this effort. Scarcely a town or precinct in the whole county was to go over to the side of "conservatism."

Odland, it may be here said, was one of the bright products from the Norwegian pioneer belt of South Dakota who had been attracted to Wisconsin by Prof. J. G. Dow, a Scotch genius, who discovered him and drew him eastward with him. After a brilliant career at the University of Wisconsin, Odland engaged some years in teaching, but his Norwegian love of fighting proved irresistible and he left the cramping atmosphere of the schoolroom for the more adventurous and stirring one of politics. By virtue of ideals, education and tempera-

ment, he belonged in the camp of reform, to which after years of wandering in the desert he was ultimately to return. His county assignment was partly accidental, which suggests another incident. It was an unfinished work which had been undertaken by the paper a year or two before through Fred Sheasby, a beardless sapling, later a famous local sport and political writer. However, while Sheasby was in the midst of his bucolic peregrinations there was a sudden demand for him at home. Sheasby, by the way, had "cut the cables" with headquarters, so the editor was perplexed as to how to reach the wandering boy. Finally a happy idea seized him. The next issue of the paper bore in conspicuous type on the middle of the front page this exhortation: "Sheasby, Come Home!" Advertising brings results, and Sheasby soon reported at headquarters.

Incidents, dramatic, serious, amusing soon came on apace. One of the most amusing episodes of the early period of the campaign was the exchange of the so-called Barber-Sturdevant correspondence. W. E. Barber, editor of the *LaCrosse Chronicle*, desiring some data to use against the administration, wrote to Mr. Sturdevant of the stalwart committee at Madison asking for it. Because of a similarity in names the letter fell into the hands of Attorney General L. M. Sturdevant, who could not resist the temptation to have some sport and turn the blunder to some advantage of his side. Accordingly he wrote a sarcastic reply to the Barber epistle and then gave both letters to the *Milwaukee Free Press*, in which paper they were elaborately "played up" on the front page.

The Barber letter follows:

LaCrosse, Wis., Jan. 7, 1904.

Mr. Sturdevant, Madison, Wis.

Dear Sir: The *Chronicle* is in need of some data which, it seems to me, you might be able to furnish us. We want to know how many game wardens there are in the state, how many factory

inspectors, how many oil inspectors, and how many other appointive officers in the state within the gift of the governor; also the amount of money paid them during the past year. We also want to know what the expenso of running the state government has been during the past year. Write me immediately if you can furnish us this. If you cannot we must take some other course to get it, for we must have it. We are compiling a nice lot of campaign material which will be very useful to the republicans when we get in the heat of the campaign and this material which we are asking for will furnish us with sufficient material in my judgment to make LaCrosse county safe and sure for the stalwarts.

Yours very truly,

W. E. BARBER.

THE REPLY

Madison, Wis., Jan. 11, 1904.

Editor *LaCrosse Chronicle*, LaCrosse, Wis.

Your letter addressed to "Mr. Sturdevant" and in which you ask for the number of game wardens, oil inspectors, factory inspectors, and other appointive officers within the gift of the governor, has been received. You say that you are compiling "a nice" lot of campaign material "and that it will furnish you with sufficient material to make LaCrosse county safe and sure for the stalwarts." In reply I will say that I have not in my possession the information which you ask. Hon. Henry Overbeck, game warden, will be able to give you the number of his deputies; Hon. A. C. Backus, factory inspector, and Hon. E. E. Mills, supervisor of inspectors of illuminating oils, will be able to give you the number of persons employed in their departments. Concerning the cost of the state government I would refer you to the secretary of state.

I could, perhaps, by the outlay of some work, get this information for you, but as I am a republican and as I understand from your letter that your "nice lot of campaign material" is to be used in an effort to disrupt and overthrow the republican party I would not wish to aid in any way. Mr. D. S. Rose of Milwaukee, a year or more ago, got together some campaign material quite similar to that which you desire and although not entirely correct, I presume it would answer your purpose quite as well as it did that of Mr. Rose. I understand that by making LaCrosse county sure for the stalwarts you mean that your county will send to the legislature assemblymen and a senator who can be relied upon to repudiate the pledges of the party and to serve the corporations. If my understanding is correct then in my opinion your cause is

a most unworthy one and ought to meet with inglorious defeat. I have given your letter to the *Milwaukee Free Press* for publication so that the people of Wisconsin may know what are the real purposes of your "harmony" campaign.

Yours truly,

L. M. STURDEVANT.

The publication of these letters led to great and impotent gnashing of teeth on one side and expansive and unrestrained mirth on the other. There were sharp threats of prosecution of the attorney general under the postal laws on the charge of tampering with mail not addressed to him, but Mr. Sturdevant pointed out that while the letter and envelope had been originally addressed to "Mr. Sturtevant," yet they had been corrected to read Mr. "Sturdevant" and tantalizingly asked "how was one to know for whom it was intended?" Anyway, if one's purposes and motives were honorable, he asked, why should one be ashamed of them or resent their exposure to the light of day? It was apparent that the best way out of the embarrassment brought on by a blundering postal underling was to forget it, and the incident passed into the accumulating store charged to experience. But while knowledge came through such mishaps wisdom yet lingered.

One of the first ends sought by the stalwart committee was to capture the student republican machinery of the university. LaFollette had always exercised a peculiar fascination over the mass of the young men of that institution and much of his political success had been due to the fact that he had been able to enlist under his banner an ever-increasing host of brilliant, brainy and enthusiastic youth, the leavening of whose influence had penetrated to the remotest corner of the state. If the student body could be made to give the appearance of repudiating or expressing a lack of confidence in the administration the moral effect, it was believed, would be far-reaching. It would be presumed by many honest

voters elsewhere that the university students, representing the highest thought of the state, and, furthermore, being at the seat of government, would be safe guides to follow in voting. Accordingly it was announced that the university republican club would be reorganized and an election of officers held on January 9. Both factions then set to work industriously and each brought out a prominent football man as a candidate. The organization of the administration forces was carried out mainly by John M. Nelson, later congressman, at whose house a number of meetings were held, and by M. B. Olbrich. H. H. Morgan and A. A. Meggett, a federal employe, undertook to proselyte the field for the stalwarts. The university was flooded with Roosevelt-Baensch circulars and much made of the fact that Judge Baensch was a distinguished alumnus of the university and entitled to the support of the students. As the day of election approached the excitement became something intense. Some of the classes were demoralized and the rivalry was nearly as strained as among the time-servers of the two camps down town. The result of the contest was the election of the LaFollette candidate by a vote of 585 to 326.

The year 1904 was destined to be replete with sensations, political and otherwise. On the morning of February 27 the citizens of Madison awoke to find the state capitol on fire. The flames broke out in the north wing at 3 o'clock and by daylight had spread to the east and west wings, threatening the destruction of the entire building. The local fire department worked to stem the progress of the flames until nearly noon when help arrived from Milwaukee, though too late to be of much value. The east and west wings were almost totally destroyed and portions of the north and south wings gutted. During the progress of the fire Governor LaFollette himself performed daring service. Donning a

rubber coat and cap, he dashed in and out of the blazing, flooded corridors, directing the rescue of records and books, and taking a hand wherever he could in fighting the progress of the flames. Among the treasures destroyed were the relics in the war museum, including many pictures and mementoes, and the body of Old Abe, the famous war eagle.

The origin of the fire was never ascertained. It is believed that the ceiling in one of the rooms on the second floor caught fire from a gas jet underneath. At any rate it was discovered here by Nat Crampton, night watchman, and reported by him.

It was generally felt that the destruction of the capitol would put a new phase on the political situation. Practically the entire state press assumed that a special session of the legislature would be called at once to make appropriations for the immediate rebuilding of the state-house. In the first shock of the disaster partisanship was sunk in state patriotism and the opposition press actually gave the governor a little credit for his brave attempt to save the building. But that shock over, they turned to see what political advantage could be reaped from it; to what extent it could be made to embarrass the administration. The extra session they figured might be fruitful in disclosures, were an investigation made; it might result in a reprimand of the administration, in upheavals; possibly the exigencies might be made to overshadow the LaFollette issues and make them fall flat before the people, making easy the defeat of the governor for re-nomination. Much was made of the fact that the insurance on the building had been allowed to lapse by Governor LaFollette. LaFollette's predecessor, Governor Scofield, at the solicitation of "Dick" Main, of prominent stalwart connections, had placed a heavy insurance on the building, but LaFollette's view was that the state should be able to protect itself and had allowed the policy to

lapse after the legislature of 1903 had enacted a law providing for state insurance of public buildings.

Then there were other problems. Taking advantage of Madison's plight, the press of other cities began discussing the advisability of attempting the removal of the capital from Madison. It was felt that Milwaukee might now make a successful bid for it. Plainly fate had unexpectedly come to the aid of the opposition by piling new embarrassments and troubles upon the governor.

Considering all these things, LaFollette quickly determined on his line of action. He saw three things: first, that an extra session would be a great expense; second, that it might encourage Milwaukee to make renewed efforts, perhaps successfully, to become the capital; and third, that it might result in some unfavorable reflection on, if not hostile action toward, the administration from the legislature. Political wisdom, at least, suggested that the plan to pursue was to minimize the incident. To forestall any move by Milwaukee, therefore, and to disarm his enemies, LaFollette resolved to avoid a special session, and to act under the authority vested in him and repair the building. However, the responsibility for the fire was laid up to LaFollette by his enemies, and to meet the criticism the state central committee convened and issued a solemn statement that no blame could attach to the governor for the destruction of the building.

Aprpos of this action Warden Curtis, a Madison author and wit, hit off the following imaginary conversation:

Well, I can't help thinkin' Bob Layfollett done a bad thing when he burned the capitol down. He might have thought it would hurt the stalwarts, but I don't believe the people of the state will see it that way.

Burn it down! Great Scott, man, what would the governor burn the capitol down for?

What for? You tell me. I've been trying to figure it out for some time and can't make out why he done it. No, sir! what did he burn the capitol down for?

* * *

The way the delay occurred was this way. Crampton seen the fire and he started on a run to alarm the proper officials and he fell over one of the game wardens—

Game wardens in the capitol, what for?

Well, this one was the game warden that takes care of the squirrels in the capitol park. Crampton picks himself up and starts to running again and falls over another game warden—

Game warden? Another game warden? I can understand the game warden for the squirrels, but what was this one for? What other game could there be around the capitol?

If you ever seen any of them fifty-dollar jackpots you wouldn't ask. Well, Crampton he picks himself up a second time and starts a-running and falls over another game warden—

Third game warden? What would a third game warden be for?

Governor's game.

Governor's game?

Yep, governor's game.

What on earth is the governor's game?

Slicker fellers than you an' me is trying to find that out. Best heads in both factions is calculating on that. What is the governor's game? Does he want to be governor again? Does he want Quarles' place? Will he throw up the governorship if he gets it, or serve his term and run for the senate afterward? What is the governor's game? I'd like mighty well to know.

* * *

I notice that in spite of the many signs to the effect that there is danger in certain parts of the capitol, posted up on trees, that the governor and his friends walk right through as unconcerned as can be. I tell you the governor is a man of nerve,—and his friends have their share of nerve, too.

That ain't no lie under certain conditions. But don't you fool yourself about the governor being in danger walking around there in the capitol. He ain't in danger, and his friends ain't neither. But some folks would be in danger there all right enough.

How do you make that out?

Everyone of them chaps working in there has orders if he sees a stalwart in the parts marked "dangerous" to drop a brick on his head.

Come off! You don't believe that. How do you know that?



Political Cartoon, Suppressed by State Journal, 1904

Know it? Don't it stand to reason? You bet, I know it. If Boss Keyes should walk in there the whole end wall would fall in.

The charge by the *Milwaukee Daily News* that Assistant Attorney General L. H. Bancroft was the holder of a railroad pass was one of the many sensations of the time. Because of LaFollette's strong anti-pass declarations, this revelation in connection with one of his official family, so to speak, was made much of by the opposition. Later a similar charge was made against other officials in the attorney general's office. Bancroft finally offered the defense that he was entitled to such pass as the local attorney of a railroad, but eventually he withdrew from the attorney general's force.

In the furious pre-caucus campaign, bulldozing of the press was a recourse of the stalwart bosses. The writer, among others, was visited and informed that opposition leaders had sufficient influence with his newspapers and press associations to bring about his removal as correspondent if he persisted in the kind of stories he was writing. This bulldozing practice was exposed by the *Madison Democrat* in a savage editorial in the course of the campaign, the *Democrat*, by the way, being then friendly to LaFollette.

On April 14 the *Democrat* had carried a startling story reading in part: "'Come In To Madison. Your Time Goes On. Report to Me—Eldridge.'" This is the message that flashed over the wires of the Milwaukee lines. It is the order which Superintendent Eldridge sent to all the men working under him who could be spared, telling them to come to Madison and there report to him. Mr. Eldridge made plain the purpose of his visit. He told the men that 'Governor LaFollette had to be beaten; that every one of them had to get out and work and carry the caucuses of the city of Madison against him'; that 'unless they did so they could sever their connection with the railroad, etc.' "

Chairman Spooner of the Baensch committee immediately sent the *Democrat* a letter expressing his "utter disgust" at the printing of such a story and promised that "the next legislature will be asked to investigate the state printing," and that the next secretary of state also would be asked to so interpret the printing contracts as to "restore the independence of the *Democrat*."

Under the caption "Chairman Spooner's Puerile Threat," the *Democrat* the following morning made a savage editorial reply to this letter, saying in part:

"The letter of Chairman Spooner to this paper is pretty conclusive proof that so far as his part in the contest extends, it is devoid of worthy principle surely."

Not since the roster scandal of a decade before had this somewhat proper sheet been so exercised.

The administration, by the way, was quick to seize upon the *Democrat's* railroad story for political advantage. On April 18, the day of the Dane county republican caucuses, flaming circulars were issued carrying a reprint of it, also setting forth that Madison owed nothing to the railroads; that the St. Paul depots were insults to the public, and that the Northwestern road, which had reaped a great harvest in Madison, had refused to place flagmen at dangerous crossings, until compelled to do so by city ordinances, etc. The railroad employes were exhorted to be independent. The circulars concluded:

It is right for the employe to take orders from his employer respecting his work. It is wrong for him to take orders from his employer respecting his ballot. Submit once and your spirit of American independence is broken. Your own self-respect is gone. The most precious right of American citizenship is manhood-suffrage. Do not surrender that right to any power on earth.

Caucuses Tonight from 5 to 8 o'Clock.

* * *

Besides the renomination of LaFollette the scheme of the administration included the ambitious undertaking of the defeat of Congressman J. W. Babcock of the third

congressional district. Although he had assisted in bringing about the nomination of LaFollette in 1900, Babcock had quickly abandoned the governor when the latter was found unamenable to machine control and had been the most effective of the stalwart leaders in defeating the reform measures of the administration. In both of the legislative sessions of 1901 and 1903 he had come from Washington to Madison to direct the fight on the governor's bills. With Henry Casson of Madison, J. L. Sturtevant of Waupaca, and others, he had also been active in the summer and fall of 1903 organizing the fight to be made on LaFollette the following year, and had thus invited the fire of the administration's batteries.

The plan of the administration was to bring out a "favorite son" to contest with Babcock for the delegation in each of the counties in his district, and then to unite this opposition at the convention. A handbook similar to the "Voters' Handbook" of 1902, exposing Babcock as a corporation servitor, was also issued. Among the many charges brought against the congressman in the handbook was that of having loaded the mails with franked material during the weighing season in order to give the railroads a heavy average on which to let mail contracts.

Twenty tons of literature, it was charged, had been franked to the Baraboo district, making an increase of \$96,000 to the Northwestern road alone over its previous receipts. Even the affidavit of a Baraboo drayman to the effect that he had broken down his dray in attempting to haul away three tons of the stuff was secured. Said one administration supporter afterwards:

One carload of reports of the centennial exposition held in Philadelphia in 1876 was sent to Baraboo, besides quantities of other matter. This material was piled up in the postoffice, the city library, in the high school, in cellars, hallways, behind doors, everywhere. Editors on coming to work would find great stacks of

books and papers on their desks. Much of it was actually later burned in the streets. It was the same story at Platteville. This town was also flooded with literature and an overflow supply of five big wagonloads was taken to an empty house in the country. All these things were attested to under oath by reputable citizens of these places. .

Babcock won the nomination, however, by the very tactics LaFollete had so often successfully employed, rushing the fight. January 28 a call was issued for the holding of the congressional convention in Baraboo March 3. Although the opposition protested that in the whole history of the party, with a single exception, such convention had not been held earlier than August the Babcock managers persisted in their plan of "winter caucuses." The result was that the "favorite sons" were unable to effect organizations in time and Babcock was renominated. The opposition thus aroused, however, brought about the congressman's defeat in the election two years later.

* * *

A significant political straw pointing the tendency of public sentiment was seen in the election that spring of a member of the supreme court. A vacancy had been created by death and the stalwarts hastened to bring out a candidate in the person of L. K. Luse of Superior. A little later on the administration side brought forward Judge J. C. Kerwin of Neenah. This latter action the stalwart press denounced as a deliberate attempt to inject politics into a judicial election. The administration retorted that it represented a majority of the electors of Wisconsin, and that it came with ill grace in a minority faction to deny the right or question the motives of the other side in presenting a candidate of its own and one presumably in sympathy with its temper. Although the practice had been generally frowned upon by the public, partisan racing for the supreme bench was not unknown in the state, and it was not long before this

contest developed into a sharp faetional fight. The ad-ministration press boldly took the position that no man ought to be supported for the plaee unless there was reasonable assurance that his decisions on the bench would be in line with the publie sentiment expressed in the legislation and policies of the administration, and attaeked Luse as "unsafe," eiting, whether justly or not, but eertainly to his disadvantage, his past eonneetions with corporation litigation and his professional association with Senator Spooner. The stalwart press, in the main, eonfined itself to presenting the high abilities and attainments of Luse and his fitness for the position.

On the faee of the returns the morning after elcetion the indieations were that Luse had been elected by a majority running into the thousands. But these returns came prinieipally from the eities. When later the eountry vote came in it was another story. One after another the strietly rural eounties returned heavily for Kerwin and when after several days all the "baekwoods" and isolated preeincts had reported, it was found that Kerwin led his eompetitor by some 15,000 votes. The result was regarded as a significant expression of the temper of the plain people on the issues pending and gave new heart to the administration.

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During all the uproar following these developments Governor LaFollette had made no publie statement that he would be a candidate for a third term as governor. Divining that sooner or later sueh announeement would be made, the opposition press ironically asked in advance who was ealling the governor to stand again anyway. This was taken by his friends as a challenge and accordingly the following call appeared in the *Mt. Horeb Times*:

The enemies of Governor LaFollette, with a great show of noise, declare that he cannot logically be a candidate for a third term unless he gets a eall from the people, which they assert he has not

yet received. If the formality of a call is to be carried out the *Times* hastens to speak out. Representing his cradled home, where he is best known and honored, this paper deems it fitting, and feels a just pride therein, that it should be the first to extend a formal call to him to again be a candidate.

Governor LaFollette, we ask you to again accept the position whose trust you have discharged with such fidelity to the people and such honor to the state. The good work begun in your inspiration must be finished, and to you do the people look for its consummation. The reforms that you have proposed have been twice overwhelmingly indorsed at the polls and the people will not be satisfied until they are written upon our statute books. And whom do they want to apply and execute them but their own intrepid champion?

We are proud of the fact that in you the young generation can find an inspiration. You are a worthy representative of the culture of our great state. But though proud of your brilliant gifts and attainments, we find still greater satisfaction in the reflection that although you have been for years under the fiercest light of scrutiny there has not been a whisper against your public or private life. No suspicion of jobbery has ever attached to any of your acts, no charge of double-dealing. On the contrary, you have been conceded a most splendidly fearless and conscientious executive. You have set a new standard to public officials and in your past record we find our best hope for your continuance as governor.

We are proud of the fact that, although the forces of corruption have temporarily defeated your reforms, a healthier civic spirit animates the state and particularly our legislative halls. Who but remembers the disgraceful conditions that governed at our state capital some years ago, when lobbyists and jobbers thronged the corridors and legislative chambers, and when railroad passes were to be had by all for the asking? The abolition of these evils, as well as others, is directly due to influences that you set in motion. Prize-fighting has not stained the good name of the state since you first put an effective check upon it, nor have you outraged public sentiment by indiscriminately opening prison doors. Abuses of long standing in our state institutions have all been corrected under your administration. The men who have been brought out to oppose you are good men, but they stand for nothing positive. In ambiguous phrase they mildly indorse your proposed reforms, but offer nothing new or satisfactory. Because of their very colorless characters and pliant natures they are made the willing stalking horses of your enemies to cloak the latter's real purpose,

that of defeating you, and making your reforms impossible. Under the plea of "Party harmony" the most vindictive campaign ever waged in Wisconsin is now being carried on by them and against a most worthy cause and a most high-minded and efficient governor. The corporations and their tools of grafters and lobbyists are behind them and were either of those men elected governor your reforms and the people's interests would be put by in mockery and laughter.

We want you because the trusts and corporations are against you. They fear you because you refuse to be their tool. They oppose a commission to fix and regulate railway rates and would escape paying their share of the taxes. Their main hope lies in defeating you. The people should honor one who has the courage and self-sacrificing devotion to principle to lead their battles. Such leaders are not always found.

You have given us a strong, clean and economical administration, but your good work is not over. We have set our hand to the plow and must not turn backward. Therefore, governor, we ask you to again come forth and lead us in another fight for principle.

When this call was reprinted in other papers throughout the state the opposition sought to make light of it, asserting that it had been written in the governor's office by his private secretary. As a matter of fact, it was written by a young newspaper man of Madison, who hailed from the same town as did the governor—the writer of this work, in fact—and entirely on his own responsibility. Serving a stalwart Madison paper, the *Wisconsin State Journal*, at the time, this newspaper man, by the way, was in a somewhat delicate position. To remain in the camp of the "enemy" and preserve a balance of fairness without stultification and without surrendering his convictions and loyalties was no easy task. Added to this was the sacrifice of foregoing service in the ranks in which he longed to be active, and the ever present consciousness that he must be regarded with some suspicion by both sides. To the credit of the editor, be it said, he stood loyally by his reporter, even in the face of strong local protest and even much underground pressure from Washington for his removal.

"We must have one LaFollette man on our staff," he invariably replied. "When we get rich enough to stand alone," he would say to this reporter, "we may return to support LaFollette, for I can't help feeling that he stands for the right things. But he won't counsel with us."

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At one of the nightly meetings in Madison of the stalwart leaders, to take stock of the day's developments, the imported editor asked:

"Well, what is there to show for the good of the cause today?"

"Nothing today," replied a local lawyer; "it all goes on the other side of the balance. Two more counties went against us."

"We must get up something to stem the tide," said the I. E. "Judge, you're an old-timer here; isn't there anything in the private life or actions of the governor we can attack and out of which we can make some capital. This thing is getting desperate. It is a condition and not a theory that confronts us."

"No," replied the judge impatiently, "we have looked for some such flaw for nigh on twenty years, but we haven't been able to find one. He hasn't even made a break in all his public speeches on which we could seize. No, it wouldn't do for us to reflect on his private character. We must find something else."

"I have it!" shouted the lawyer, eagerly seizing a straw that floated into his fancy. "I see the administration is making much of its collection of war claims against the general government. It is seeking to make capital out of the fact that it has succeeded in collecting this big sum and added it to the state's funds. Let us turn this into a boomerang by charging misapplication of moneys. You see instead of placing it back in the trust fund from which it was borrowed by the govern-

ment the administration has placed it in the general fund. Let us raise a great howl over it; say a new scandal has been uncovered and that there is strong talk of prosecution for misappropriating of money, misfeasance or something."

"I don't see how we can make it appear that the state is being robbed by simply lifting the money out of one drawer and placing it in another," said the practical judge dubiously.

"We can make the transaction appear mysterious and make our story technical and hard to understand," said the lawyer. "We ought to catch a few by that. Anyway there's nothing else." It was agreed that this was to be tomorrow's sensation.

Trivial and seemingly ridiculous as the above may appear, it is practically a faithful reflection of what actually occurred. The opposition press for a time carried long stories on this alleged "irregularity" of the administration and declared that there was strong talk of prosecution.

CHAPTER XXI

The "Press Gang."

SOMETHING OF THE PART IT PLAYED IN BIG POLITICAL GAME—
"BILL" POWELL AND OTHERS DESCRIBED—W. D. CONNOR ENTERS
UPON POLITICAL STAGE—ELECTED STATE CHAIRMAN—BREAKS WITH
LAFOLLETTE OVER UNITED STATES SENATORSHIP.

IT WAS an afternoon early in the spring of 1904. By one of those mysterious telepathic conjunctions peculiar to the press the political sleuths of all the Milwaukee newspapers had fluttered into Madison, as they frequently did in this exciting period of war and rumors of war. Intuitively they had divined that some new sensation was about to burst the bounds of secrecy. The extraordinary situation in Wisconsin was attracting even national attention and bringing correspondents from far and near, while the state press was constantly reveling in matter for exploitation.

On this occasion they were all met in the outer office of the executive chamber awaiting developments in the inner office. In accordance with the Homeric practice of passing in review the heroes of ancient song, a like service for these later worthies may not here be amiss, while waiting with them.

What shall be said of "Uncle Dick" Petherick, one of the most genial, most sarcastic, most irreverent, most incomprehensible geniuses that ever pounded the cobbles of newspaper row? Dick had as many fine points about him as a porcupine. He had come up from the antediluvian past of journalism, having from the days of his "devilhood" seen all the stages of evolution from the hand printer to the linotype, from the Washington hand press to the mighty revolving Goss of today. For years he had reflected in the columns of the Milwaukee dailies

the news, the foibles and follies of the so-called overgrown German town on the shores of Lake Michigan till he could say truthfully of the time: "All of it have I seen; much of it have I been." He it was, too, who had stood at the head of the stairs, iron bar in hand, and held at bay a mob of strikers come to wreck the plant of his employers. He saved the paper, and was soon afterwards rewarded, with a discharge. Then he had returned to his old Madison home and received an appointment to the state board of control, as a member of which he made the care and happiness of the unfortunate children at the state school for dependents his special solicitude.

Dick was like rare old wine. He was surcharged with anecdotal exuberance and had the happiest faculty of touching the proper spring in illustration of the point under discussion. And best of all, his stories were true episodes that had come under his personal observation.

For years Dick had distilled his concentrated wisdom and drollery into a stick of squibs a day entitled, "Philosophy of the Street," which people took regularly as a caper sauce with their evening meals. It is difficult to make a choice among these gems, but here are a few scintillating samples:

Two people may differ and both be wrong.

There are times in our lives when we look for people to advise us wrongly.

When a mother runs the family the children seldom disgrace it.

No justice of the peace is ever meek enough to object to being called Judge.

Girls who go husband hunting often find that the game is not worth the powder wasted on the lapel of the coat.

One trouble about trying to make both ends meet is that we are apt to bust in the middle.

Force of circumstances is the only perpetual motion that never wears out.

Some people are so afraid of lying that they don't dare to tell the truth.

Lovely woman does not have to stoop to folly; it is ever ready to climb up to her unless she gives it a vigorous push in the other direction.

If a man is careful in selecting his friends it is of little moment what kind of enemies he has.

* * *

There was Bill Powell of the *Milwaukee Free Press*, the soul of good fellowship; against the rock of whose urbanity and imperturbability the waves of passion dashed and fretted in vain. Briefly, Bill was big, bluff and bully. Never known to harbor a resentment, his composure was irritating to the more human fellows of the craft, who were more or less swayed by the passions of the hour.

Bill's position was one of no mean responsibility. As representative of the official organ of reform, on his untried but adequate shoulders fell a heavy load. His was the delicate responsibility of speaking by the eard, of pitching the keynote, as it were, for all the lesser sheets of its ilk in the state. He alone, with big John Hannan, had the envied privilege of *carte blanche* to the holy of holies, the executive office, and thereby had a voice in determining the nature and amount of news that was to go out from this prolific sensation-generating center.

The future historian of this turbulent period, if discerning, will ascribe no little credit for the ultimate triumph of "reform"—the stalwart press always quoted the word,—to the fact that Bill Powell represented the *Free Press* at the capital at this time. With practically all the other papers represented at Madison either hostile or indifferent to the administration, to him fell the onerous task of each day undoing their iniquity of the day before, as he viewed it; of completing their garbled reports, of unwinding their tangled webs of prejudice and misrepresentation, and setting the public right with

reference to the conduct of affairs at the capitol, from the administration point of view.

He was the buffer between the administration and the opposition, and it was in this capacity that he unconsciously was to become a factor of no small consequence. Daily brought face to face with the suspicious, the exasperated, the unscrupulous representatives of the opposition, he was too often the nearest object of attack in the relentless war waged on the governor and had to vicariously bear the taunts, the threats, the derision and the spleen heaped upon the administration. But his equanimity was equal to any test. Without surrendering an iota of his paper's convictions or stultifying himself in the least degree, he preserved an unruffled port, disarming their taunts with a story or pleasantry, meeting their charges with a plausible explanation and when these failed appealing to their honesty and fair play. By these means he managed to be on good terms with all. However much they might have hated the governor, however much scorned and despised the *Free Press*, they could not quarrel with its big, broad-based, prosperous-looking representative, who before they realized it had ingratiated himself into their favor by learning their first names and relieving them of their best brands of cigars. In the genial warmth of his presence all acerbity melted away; men came to see how small it was to entertain malice and spite, and unconsciously came to estimate the temper and aims of the reform movement in kinder frame of mind. Thus gently brought to ineline in the right direction, here and there one occasionally grew from a hater to be a supporter of the administration.

In the earlier days of the reform movement in Wisconsin Bill was a democrat and in the first LaFollette campaign actually espoused from the stump the cause of "Bryan, Bomrich or Blood." He was then living

innocently in Madison, sang on Sundays in a church choir and established a musical tradition associated with moonlit evenings and the lakes. Then he drifted to Milwaukee, became annexed to the *Free Press* and rose to the enviable position of political writer. He thus became a person of consequence, so much so that it became significant to take lunch with him. As remarked, nothing could ruffle his even tenor. Even when Dave Rose threw him off his special train in the wilds near Oshkosh because Powell was writing real news, making it necessary for him (Bill) to "hit the ties" back to civilization—imagine the spectacle, as one of his fellows said—the benevolent despot who ruled Milwaukee did not get the flaying another would have given him, for as gaily as he met the duns for his board bills at the Avenue hotel, Powell went serenely on his way while all the world wondered, and journalistic dignity received a crowning vindication.

Then there was Gil Vandereock, by common consent dubbed the dean of the fourth estate, not by virtue of length of service, but in deference to a certain semi-serious lordly bearing, and air *distingue*, and because representing the haughty old *Milwaukee Sentinel*, the organ of the opposition, hence of the political aristocracy of the state. A man of the world, courtly, suave, with a felicity for ingenious and attenuated expression, he was courted by all and generally respected. Gil's high art, for which he cannot be given too much credit, lay in giving a maximum of news with a minimum of prejudicial flavor. In sympathy with the spirit of his paper, he yet had too fine a sense of newspaper ethics to unduly distort or tell untruth. It must have occasionally roused the gorge of the less sensitive owners of his paper that he often told the honest truth when misrepresentation would have been more to their liking and served the purpose better. As Bill Powell was the keeper of the great

seal of the administration, so Gil was the official spokesman of "the interests." That he enjoyed a degree of confidence not often given newspapermen was a high tribute to his judgment, his perspicacity and his professional honesty. His plaint that he had more stories that he was not allowed to write than he was permitted to exploit was generally accepted as a fact. He was a party to many a secret conference and deal, and more, he was an adviser, whose judgment, however, was too often disregarded by the stubborn and less astute big ones of his faction who persisted in blindly leading the blind. Kindly, honest, outspoken, Gil even enjoyed to an extent the confidence of LaFollette, whom he always respected and to whom he became more and more attached with time.

Grassie of the *Evening Wisconsin* was there to get his first whirl at state politics. A small body surmounted by a hooked nose, bearing a great pair of glasses, and a shining expanse of baldness, he was a figure not soon to be forgotten. Like Powell, Grassie was a minister's son, yet it were hardly fair to thus lightly condemn him without qualification. He must of necessity have possessed elements of worth or his would not have been the important Madison commission for his sheet. In the easy and familiar parlance of the craft, Grassie was styled "an impulsive cuss." It is said that in his locust-and-wild-honey days, soon after leaving college, George was wandering aimlessly about the streets of Superior pondering the design of the Creator in placing him (Grassie) into the scheme of things, when he suddenly saw a great light and jumping on board a train went direct, and penniless, to Milwaukee, and to the office of the *Evening Wisconsin*, and demanded a job. The incident was typical of Grassie and his methods. With a "come-on-boys" air of familiarity he took and maintained a position in the confidences of the men who made

the news and by conducting a free lance "dope" column he added spice to his somewhat sedate and correct sheet. Grassie was true to the type of newspaperman so happily described by the poet:

Enslaved, improvident, elate,
He greets the embarrassed gods, nor fears
To grasp the iron hand of fate,
Or match with destiny for beers.

When Grassie got on the trail of a sensation it mattered not that entreating angels sought to stay him and declared they dared not follow,—down he would run it, whatever the consequences. In his early reportorial days he became inoculated with the virus of the "eleventh story league" and was never quite able to get the taint out of his political system. Later he became a member of the legislature and passed into oblivion.

No review of the worthies of the "press gang" of the time would be complete without a notice of big John Hannan, chief factotum of the governor's office. When Jerre C. Murphy dropped out as private secretary in LaFollette's second term, and went out to fight the copper dragons of Montana John had come in as his successor. It was like taking an important command in the midst of battle, but being born to battle John was happy. He had already been through some fire. Both as newspaperman and as practical politician and orator, he had taken an active hand in various contests with the public service corporations in Milwaukee.

As private secretary John appreciated his responsibilities. He watched his chief as he would a child, not only shielding the latter's health, but applying the rod of outspoken opinion when necessary. Nor did he make many mistakes of diplomacy. He seldom burst with a mighty secret at the wrong time, although his pockets were literally stuffed with state-shaking potentialities. It was said that John could answer any question off-hand except the color of the desk underneath his papers.

It used to be said in later years at Washington that while certain states were practically unrepresented in the United States senate, Wisconsin was fortunate in having three senators, LaFollette, Uncle Ike Stephenson, and John Hannan. "Yes," added a New York visitor on one such occasion, "and John is worth more than a half dozen up there I might name."

An American writer of discernment has said that it is a far easier job to be president of the United States than to be the city editor of a metropolitan daily; that the latter responsibility calls for more decision, executive ability, nervous reserve and actual physical and mental strength than the former.

As such city editor in his day John demonstrated his capacity to fill a presidential job if necessary. It is related of him that one of his reporters came dashing in one night with a fine story. But unfortunately he was not certain of his facts and hesitated in his conscientiousness. "To blank with the facts," said the decisive John, "write the story."

But John appreciated the value of facts and knew how to turn them to powerful account. When in 1900 Charles Pfister brought suit for libel against the *Milwaukee Sentinel*, and it was up to that sheet to defend itself. John Hannan, as one of his fellows said, "jumped into his fighting clothes and dug up so much stuff on Pfister that the latter concluded the wise thing to do would be to buy the *Sentinel*, his own libel suit and all." Likewise it was John, who a year later, while on the new *Free Press*, went down into Grant and Lafayette counties and in two days—he couldn't stay longer for want of money,—so completely exposed the stalwart practices of buying up state papers as to put a final crimp in the activities of the Eleventh Floor League. These were among the things John did—he did them with his little facts.

LaFollette's reputation does not rest on a disinclination to put himself forward or to face a row. For instance, once when he rose to address the senate President Pro Tem Frye seemed to wish to ignore him and rush through a vote. LaFollette called, "Mr. President!" No recognition. Again Mr. LaFollette called out, this time somewhat louder. Still there was no recognition and the vote was about to be put. At this LaFollette pulled out his stopper to its full length, as he said, and in a voice seemingly loud enough to crack the glass in the ceiling, called out: "Mr. President!" The presiding officer jumped in startled amazement and turned, but was so embarrassed he couldn't place the Wisconsin statesman, whereupon the latter introduced himself as "the senator from Wisconsin" and proceeded to speak.

But even LaFollette would occasionally lapse in battle; not so with John. He believed in fighting three hundred sixty-five days a year and as many more as leap year permitted. With the instinct of the Irish born from sleeping for centuries upon their arms, John challenged all comers to stand as friends or foes and then did business with them accordingly. "You can't handle office-seekers with Christian Science," he once observed.

Not the least picturesque element in this interesting period was thus furnished in Big John himself.

Another new man, C. H. Kelsey, also came out from Milwaukee for a day or two. In appearance Kelsey suggested a slightly shrunken edition of Governor Peek and occasionally a kinship seemed apparent between the writings of these two worthies. To Kelsey was later to fall the duty of covering the legislative session for the Philistine *Milwaukee Journal* and explaining each day its editorial Ishmaelism. Hated by many and trusted by none at that time, his sheet was nevertheless read by all and in the consciousness of this fact Kelsey labored like Sisyphus to keep abreast of the current of affairs.

The soul of industry and fidelity, he delivered the goods, too, and as per color desired, writing halos or hellfire around "Unele Ike" and other political saints and sinners as the occasion required. Kelsey hailed from upper Michigan, but previously had been, as he said, a "burr" on Hamilton College where he acquired his polish. It is said that Kelsey was once sent to cover a big German wedding in Milwaukee. As soon as the newly-made deaf old father-in-law learned that his visitor was a representative of the press he quickly called out: "Frau! Here is a newspaper man; get him something to eat."

Kelsey's later capital city assignment could scarcely be considered a snap. Besides being expected to be omnipresent and omniscient with reference to everything pertaining to the legislature and statehouse, he was expected to watch the city, as well, never to sleep more than an hour at a time and then with one eye open and to be ready at any moment to interview some professor on the latest bug, or Mrs. Brown on how she felt at being left out from the last Main reception. A good fellow, here's a toast to Kelsey!

Where is the pen to do justice to Winter Everett? Alas! it is still crude gold in the bosom of mother earth. His deserved immortality will never be realized in its rich completeness, since every biographer must be less than his hero. Indefatigable, pertinacious, daring, Winter had been known in his early years as the boy wonder of the newspaper world and later years justified the promise of his teens. In industry, conscientiousness and devotion to his sheet he approached the old ideal of service, sweating for duty not for hire.

Winter's imagination was the despair of all his fellows. Theirs was to his as moonlight unto sunlight, or as water unto wine. Given one fact they but clumsily recorded it, unconnected, unadorned, while Winter given one would add another and from the combination deduce

a third. This trait of "anticipating" doubtless was responsible for his famous and original phrase, "echoes of the coming fight."

He had a positive genius for political deduction and candor compels the admission that in many instances his conclusions later were verified in fact. He was the terror of the political crook and many a man in Wisconsin today is trying in unobtrusive and contrite ways to live down some discreditable exposure brought about by Winter's merciless pen. His record for scoops stands perhaps unmatched in Wisconsin newspaper history. He it was who during this exciting period laid bare the fact and compelled the admission that practically all the officials in the attorney general's office, LaFollette exponents though they were, had been or were in possession of railroad passes, an exposure which it is believed was responsible for the retirement of at least one of the principal members of the force. His keen intuition was also shown when immediately on the announcement of Lenroot's candidacy for governor in 1906 he predicted that Herman L. Ekern would be the next speaker of the assembly.

Winter came to be known as the keeper of LaFollette's conscience. When all the other correspondents were thrown off the trail, when the state remembering LaFollette's predilection for doing the startling and unexpected knew not what next was coming, one needed but to turn to the columns of the *Daily News* where the most intricate processes of LaFollette's reasoning and intriguing were laid bare. In fact, it is said that the governor himself in the multitude of his cares occasionally reverted to Winter's column to get the thread, temporarily lost, of some line of thought or policy that he had contemplated, but this may be a Lush exaggeration.

Winter had alternately dreamed for years of being a farmer, a lawyer or a great editor, but the continuance

of LaFollette in public life made the dream more and more remote. He felt that his mission in life was to camp on the trail of LaFollette and to inform the state of his movements and designs. Grassie's slogan, "Watch Hatton," was a plagiarism of the shibboleth earlier adopted by Winter for his exclusive use, "Watch LaFollette!" In justice to Winter and his paper it should be added that they dealt honestly with LaFollette on the whole and eventually supported much of his legislation.

Thoroughly despising shams and attitudes, Winter knew no such thing as human greatness, nor did any sanctity attach to public men or occasions. He had seen too much fustianism in it all. At the most solemn or thrilling moments, when impassioned orators were at the climax of fervid appeal, shaking the state and creating new political epochs, Winter would unconcernedly stroll into the legislative chamber and coolly promenade to the speaker's desk, oblivious to all that was being said and unpoetically chewing a finger nail or reading a newspaper. It was not that he was not himself interested or failed to grasp the significance of the occasion, but long contact with the world and public men and measures had worn off all provincial wonder and awe and rounded him into the typical metropolitan newspaper man who could meet tragedy and comedy alike unmoved and without surprise.

To show how utterly inadequate is one pen to do justice to a facile character like Everett one needs but to read the following from a brother scribe whom the writer asked to contribute some impressions of the Milwaukee genius. He wrote:

Winter Everett, the legislative correspondent of the *Milwaukee Daily News*, would never take a prize at a beauty show, but he is a hustler.

In earlier years, when Winter thought it was cheaper to buy a new pair of socks than gather the old ones together and take

them to the laundry, he was known as the "boy wonder" and he had something on all the other Marathon writers.

Former Assemblyman Henry Huber of Stoughton roomed with Everett when they were students at the University of Wisconsin. Winter was then a student in the law school and Huber thought Winter was destined to become president of the United States.

"He had an original way of taking down lectures," said Huber one day. "He would attend class, take a few notes, and then return to his room and produce the lecture verbatim, it seemed to me. I could never understand how he could remember so accurately all that was said. Everett explained it by saying that it was the newspaper way. I didn't know much about newspapermen and their ways at that time, but I was deeply impressed with Everett's ability to reproduce a long lecture from a few notes which were very hard to read."

Winter was raised in a newspaper office, as the expression goes, and he knows the game for what it is worth. He has been reporting politics for years, which means that he is not the most popular man in the world. Winter has a way all his own. He will permit a fellow newspaperman to tell him all he knows, which may not take long, and then will quietly inform you that he printed that same story two weeks ago.

Before I knew Everett real well I got him confused with Walter Wellman. It was about time for the republican platform to come from the printers. The newspapermen were putting in sleepless nights, fearing the platform might fall into the hands of some competitor. I met Winter in the capitol and told him the first copies of the platform were available. As a cub I was a bit proud to think that I knew of this before Everett and proceeded to tell him about a few of the planks. One plank in particular was of great interest to him and I gave him the details of it.

After he had learned all I knew, he said:

"Why, I helped to write that plank myself."

A few minutes later Winter was in our office asking for an extra copy of the platform, and it seemed a little strange to me that he should ask so many questions about the very plank he said he had helped to write.

Winter is well liked on the *Daily News*. Down there they think he is a whale, and it is said he is one of the highest salaried scribes in the state. Everett is too busy to have much time to play. When he was younger he was a pool shark, and could trim most of the boys in the Chicago press club. During the Spanish American war he was a correspondent in the south, remaining with the troops until they returned north. In presidential campaigns he

usually rides on special trains with the candidates. William Jennings Bryan knows Winter very well, and when he was last in Madison the Milwaukee scribe rode to the depot on the top seat of Bryan's carriage.

* * *

Bill Schoenfield, for years the faithful Madison yard-master of the *Milwaukee Sentinel*, was on hand as he always had a faculty of being whenever in the vernacular "hell broke loose." A fellow of infinite jest and a laugh that carried contagion with it, Bill nevertheless could be sternly serious in his work. Bill had a remarkable faculty of putting quickly the essential question in an interview, then quietly and unsuspectingly leading his subject off into pleasant channels of forgetfulness whence the victim would wake up the next day to wonder when, where and how he had given so much away. Bill hailed from Monroe, a town whose principal exports have been limberger cheese and bright newspaper men. No other man who ever operated in the Madison field has given the world so many amusing feature stories as Bill Schoenfield. A collection of the university and capital romances and escapades unearthed by him would make many a day's entertaining reading. As Assemblyman John Hughes said at a press dinner afterwards: "The devil who was responsible for giving me the anti-tights notoriety and who has played the deuce in general with more politicians than anyone else is Bill Schoenfield."

Also, there was young Fred Holmes, whom Dr. Wilder described as of the tribe of Omros, and Louis Bridgman, of the tribe of Antigos, both of whom the doctor, "in his weakness for missionary work," as he said, had taken under his protecting wing; Bob Knoff, a budding Janesville Hearst; "Ned" Jordan, a distressful student muck-raker and later auto king; "Art" Crawford, a later famous correspondent, and lastly, the modest writer of these pages.

In the inner chamber with the governor was the new

man of mystery in Wisconsin politics and whose taking of a train at Milwaukee for Madison, with one or two other half breed leaders, had led to the hegira of the press sleuths to the capital, William D. Connor. Connor's brief flashing as a luminary across the sky of reform may be here noted.

On December 12, 1903, LaFollette went to Neillsville to make a speech, which speech was generally regarded as practically beginning his third term campaign. After the speech a man came to the hotel where LaFollette was stopping and introduced himself as W. D. Connor of Marshfield. He appeared a quiet, soft-spoken man, sincere, yet with somewhat of an air of mystery. He declared that he had suffered long from unfair treatment at the hands of the railroads; that he had been obliged to build his own lines in part; that he favored the proposition of better regulation of them and would like to help the LaFollette cause along. LaFollette thanked him; welcomed him as a new acquisition and after a pleasant visit the two parted. This was LaFollette's first meeting with Connor.

The next spring, after the capitol had burned, Connor again came to see LaFollette and offered to help the cause along with a cash subscription. He contributed to the campaign \$1,000 or more. Apparently he then put into operation some of the craft of manipulation for which he is given so much credit, for when the state convention met at Madison in May H. W. Chynoweth announced that friends of the Marshfield man were urging the election of Connor as chairman of the state central committee. LaFollette was greatly surprised at this and made the observation that he was "pretty new," that the people of the state did not know him, that he had not been long with the cause, etc. But it was pointed out that he was a man of wealth and therefore his selection would turn the edge of the charge that the cause was a

menace to men of business (most big business men being against it). LaFollette finally yielded and Connor was elected, somewhat to the surprise of the people of the state.

When the campaign was over and the election of a legislature of the LaFollette persuasion was assured Isaac Stephenson of Marinette came to Madison and made known to Governor LaFollette that he wanted the United States senatorship. In the great fight for the state ticket and the election of a reform legislature the remoter question of the senatorship had scarcely been considered. LaFollette informed Stephenson that no members had been pledged to any candidate so far as he knew and advised him to make a canvass and see how they felt toward him. Stephenson asked LaFollette to name a man to do so, but LaFollette declined to assume this semblance of bossism and advised Stephenson to get his own man. Stephenson secured former Assemblyman Henry Overbeek, who visited and corresponded with the various members, and finally reported to Stephenson that he could not be elected. Stephenson accepted this. Then at a meeting of the state central committee Connor is reported to have said, in jocular or serious vein, that the only man who could be elected senator was W. D. Connor. This was the first intimation that Connor had senatorial aspirations.

Late in November Governor LaFollette went to St. Louis to visit the world's fair. He was followed in a day or two by his private secretary, Colonel Hannan, Senator Stout and others, who came in deep agitation with the news that Connor was actively laying plans for the senatorship. With a fight on between him and Stephenson they believed the cause and all reform legislation might be "shot to pieces." Such fight must be averted. On LaFollette's return Connor sent word asking for an interview. At the meeting, as the story goes,

he informed LaFollette of his candidacy and wanted the governor's support. LaFollette told Connor he questioned the wisdom of such an early candidacy; that he (Connor) was not well enough known and probably could not be elected. Quick as flash Connor asked:

"Are you a candidate?"

"No," replied the governor.

"Will you be a candidate?" pursued Connor.

"No, I will not be a candidate," replied LaFollette, "unless conditions make it necessary in order to retain harmony and secure the legislation pledged in the platform. If they do make it necessary I shall be a candidate for the senate, the cemetery, or anything else."

"Are you aware," continued Connor, as the story goes, "that the man who can control twelve votes cannot only control the senatorship but can defeat your legislation?"

A stormy scene is said to have followed, with Connor leaving the executive chamber angry.

LaFollette was unanimously elected senator later on, but from that time Connor was hostile to LaFollette.



Mrs. LaFollette Speaking to Farmers

CHAPTER XXII

Pre-Convention Contests.

GOVERNOR SOUNDS KEYNOTE OF CAMPAIGN IN MILTON JUNCTION
GRANGE SPEECH — DEFENDS GRANGE LEGISLATION — EXCITING
CAUCUS CAMPAIGN OPENS—VOTE IN DANE COUNTY EXCEEDS THAT
IN GENERAL ELECTION—MANY CONTESTS IN COUNTIES—INDICA-
TIONS STALWARTS DETERMINED ON DESPERATE COURSE.

WITH jest and tale the assembled newspapermen had been long beguiling the time in the outer office.

“Well, when I was doin’ poliee on the *Sentinel*,” broke in Everett, whereat there was a sudden retreat on the part of the older men present. Vandereook suddenly remembered that he had an important engagement at the Park; Powell that he had a bulletin to file; Kelsey that Campbell wanted to know if a badger was a “Wisconsinian or a Wisconsinian.” These sudden attacks of professional conscience invariably smote his fellows whenever Winter would revert to his poliee days on the *Sentinel*.

Winter having inflicted his story on his remaining fellows, “Uncle Diek” Petherick began: “That reminds me of a story of Billy Ginty.” Diek could always be counted upon for a Ginty story.

“I was once sittin’ in to a game with Billy,” began Unele Diek—it was as far as he got. The door suddenly flew open.

“Have you heard that the stalwarts have leased the opera house to hold a rival state convention?” yelled Rodney Elward, the famous Kipling reeiter, as he came storming in.

It was the first public intimation of the far-reaching scheme the stalwarts were laying.

In accordance with the dashing method long agreed upon, the administration determined to rush the issue promptly at the opening of the new year and events were soon moving with extraordinary celerity.

The long considered plan of but one battle, and that an early and decisive one, awaited but its formal announcement when the chairman of the state central committee should consider the hour most opportune. In the meantime the governor was engrossed in the preparation of his first political speech of the campaign in which was to be sounded the keynote of the coming fight. This speech, the keynote of 1904, delivered before the Milton Junction grange January 29 was in effect an exhaustive historical brief in defense of the granger legislation of thirty years before and a practical reiteration of the same issues as a challenge for the coming campaign. Thus was this extraordinary campaign to witness among other anomalies the final vindication of this granger legislation by a republican governor and its practical repudiation by the party that had enacted it and on the issue of which it had once ridden into power.

Of this legislation the governor said in part:

The granger legislation was the first effort on the part of the people of this country to apply the rules and principles of the law for the control of common carriers to the railroad business of the country. It was the first attempt to take from the railroad presidents the kingly prerogatives which made them masters of the highways of commerce and trade. It was a battle royal, and as upon the meadows of Runnymede, Englishmen first wrested from King John their first bill of rights, so in the granger states was the great battle waged which established as the law of this country the right of the people, through legislation, to regulate transportation charges upon the railroads of the land. * * *

The repeal of the Potter law is now general—regarded as a mistake by the best modern writers on the railway problem. It has at last dawned upon them and others that the law was just and that, above all, it was a step in the right direction. It did not do away with discriminations. But this was because the roads declined to observe the law, and because adequate machinery for

its enforcement had not been provided. Discriminations will never be abolished until the state takes complete control of the rate-making power.

But even if the Potter law did not accomplish all that was expected of it, it taught railway managers many useful lessons. They learned for the first time that there was a higher authority. This law also brought the question before the courts, and by the decisions that followed all doubt was forever removed as to the authority of the state to fix rates and exercise control over the railroads. This alone was probably worth many times more to the people than the cost of the movement.

A suspension of activities on both sides was caused by the burning of the state capitol, February 27, but on March 18 the state central committee issued the call for the state convention to be held in Madison on the early date of May 18. Immediately calls for caucuses were issued by county committees, the first being held April 16 in Sauk county. Owing to the coupling of the Baensch candidacy with that of Congressman Babcock just before this Sauk county went for Baensch and inspired the greatest elation in the stalwart camp. Other counties quickly followed and the returns were awaited with the keenest anxiety by the rival factions, the caucus battles often sharing double column head honors with the battles of the Russian-Japanese war then raging. A whirlwind speaking tour by Governor LaFollette added a dramatic element to the contest.

April 18 was one of the great caucus days of the campaign, no less than fifteen counties electing delegates. So great was the interest taken in the day's developments that all the metropolitan papers issued extras as the returns from important counties came in.

Particularly interesting was the battle in Dane county where was presented the remarkable spectacle of a party caucus vote running by thousands ahead of that cast in the last general election. It was also to furnish an illustration of the general shrewdness of the administration. The caucuses for the country districts were set

for the afternoon while those for the cities of Madison and Stoughton were called for the evening. Many of the townships were thus able to report before sundown and as one after another showed heavy returns for LaFollette the administration struck off handbills giving these returns and flooded Madison with them, almost before the polls were opened in the city, to show the drift of the tide. No doubt this course bore results. LaFollette carried every ward in the city of Madison, as well as every ward in Stoughton. The total republican vote for governor in the county in the preceding election of 1902 was 7,561, yet the caucus returns on this day showed a total of 9,561 or just 2,000 more, LaFollette receiving 5,783 and Baensch 3,778. In the fifth ward of Madison—the university ward—where the polls were closed before all had voted, a total of 568 votes, of which 178 were on affidavits, was cast in three hours. There was great rejoicing in the administration camp at this victory. A great throng of the governor's admirers had gathered in the executive office that evening to receive returns. In the midst of the excitement a breathless courier rushed in with the news that the last precinct to report—the heavy fifth ward at the university—had been carried by overwhelming vote for LaFollette. "That makes it unanimous," shouted the governor. The stalwarts raised the cry that the administration had been voting democrats, a charge presumably not without foundation, and even went to the extent of serving formal protest upon Chairman Pederson against delegates to the state convention elected by democratic votes.

It is an interesting fact to note that while the total vote of the city was about 5,000, practically 4,000 votes were cast in the republican caucuses. Nevertheless the democrats controlled in the city election that spring, in fact had a clear field.

It should be explained that the republicans of Madison put no city ticket in the field. This course was believed to reflect the wishes of the governor, who perhaps hoped to profit by this consideration of an opposing party, and the wisdom of which was established by the later caucus results. The democrats apparently turned in to the republican caucuses in large numbers and supported the administration.

The conference at which the decision was reached to place no republican ticket in the city field was an interesting one. A delegation of local republican leaders—the writer, as secretary of the city committee, among them—called on the governor to consider the course to be pursued in the local campaign. The democrats had nominated William D. Curtis, a popular and progressive citizen, for mayor. It was understood that the governor desired that no republican candidate be put in the field for mayor, holding that it would redound to the advantage of the state ticket locally were the somewhat dubious hope of his election sacrificed and not permitted to unnecessarily complicate the political situation. It was important that the administration should get a strong home endorsement. But the governor refused to directly express such wish. He paced the floor saying, "It is not for me to dictate; it is for you citizens to say." However, his callers were not lacking in the proverbial faculty of those who on the winking of authority know how to interpret a law. They left the conference and no candidate was nominated.

It is not necessary for power to employ the direct and brutal phrase. Its wishes are readily interpreted, however delphic the suggestion. A certain young man had taken an examination before a state board. The examination returns being somewhat slow in coming in an influential relative of the young candidate asked the governor if he could not prod the board along a little.

Ringling up the board, the governor said: "Can you tell me how Mr. So-and-So came out in the examination he took recently. I am quite interested in him and would like to know how he fared?" After a moment or two the board reported that the candidate had successfully passed the examination.

* * *

Rivalry ran so high as to at times promise violence. On the eve of the caucuses in Milwaukee the excitement was so great that it was feared bloodshed might break out the next day. To do what he could to cripple the LaFollette forces, Mayor Rose had previously removed all the election inspectors who were LaFollette men and had filled their places with democrats and stalwarts. It was expected that these officials would make it as unpleasant as possible for the administration voters and rush them through the booths with scant ceremony. To protect the rights of the voters and to brace them up the LaFollette leaders obtained an opinion from the city attorney that a voter might remain in a booth as long as he wished, providing he did not interfere with anyone else in voting. This opinion was printed and mailed to every worker available the night before, together with an appeal to everyone to be on watch and to stand as firm for his rights at the polls as he would for his rights in his home. This action no doubt had some deterring influence on these officials the following day. But the situation was a tense one. Governor LaFollette arrived in Milwaukee in the afternoon of the day before the caucuses to deliver a speech there in the evening.

As they left the Plankinton hotel for the hall where the governor was to speak Henry Cochems could not forbear mentioning the anxiety he felt over the outcome the following day. "We may see some bloody times at some of the booths," he remarked. With a significant grimace and a look that spoke volumes of determination, LaFol-

lette replied: "Never mind; stand firm; I am still governor, and I enjoy the pardoning power." There were many exciting scenes at the polls next day, and it is said many guns were carried, but no serious clashes took place.

The closeness of the race and the fact that caucuses were held up to within a day of the opening of the state convention served to keep interest up to a high pitch. Although the *Milwaukee Sentinel* as early as May 8 had practically conceded the renomination of Governor LaFollette, the stalwart leaders kept up strong claims of a majority to the end. May 13 they declared they needed but four votes to defeat LaFollette and when the last caucuses were over May 16 they claimed a combined total of 555 votes, or 22 more than were needed to win. The administration, on the other hand, claimed a total of 609 votes and conceded 329 to Baensch and 127 to Cook.

But there were many contests.

As the recognized authority on credentials, the state central committee met at Madison May 17, the day before the convention, and held sessions until 11 o'clock the next day, disposing of these contests. This committee included sixteen administration men and six stalwarts. It was shown afterward that by unanimous vote the committee had seated a clear majority of administration delegates. Many able lawyers appeared before the committee in the interests of the various contestants. Since it was the action of this committee that was pleaded by the stalwarts in excuse of their bolt, a brief abstract of its proceedings and of the delegate status at the convention will help to an understanding of the situation. A careful study of this phase of affairs made at the time by a broad-minded administration supporter follows:

Of the 1,065 delegates elected, 108 were contested, leaving 957 delegates that all agreed at that time, were entitled to seats in the convention.

Of these 957 delegates, those from the following counties were for Mr. Cook: Calumet, 7; Fond du Lac, 25; Green Lake, 8; Vilas, 5; Winnebago, 30; Langlade, 4; Outagamie, 21; Kewaunee, 3; Milwaukee, 25; making 128.

Of the 957 those from the following counties and districts were for Mr. Baensch: First district of Brown county, 11; first district of Columbia, 9; Door, 9; Florence, 2; Gates, 3; Iron, 5; Jefferson, 15; Kenosha, 12; first district of LaCrosse, 11; Langlade, 2; Lincoln, 9; Manitowoc, 17; Marathon, 19; second district of Marinette, 9; Marquette, 6; Milwaukee, 38 $\frac{2}{3}$, (or perhaps only 37); Ozaukee, 5; Rock, 32; Sauk, 18; Shawano, 13; first district of Sheboygan, 10; Walworth, 20; first district of Waukesha, 10; Pepin, 4; Pierce, 14, and Washington, 10; making in all 313 $\frac{2}{3}$.

Of the 957 delegates, those from the following counties and districts were for LaFollette: Adams, 6; Barron, 12; Bayfield, 10; second district of Brown, 8; Buffalo, 8; Burnett, 4; Chippewa, 13; Clark, 15; second district of Columbia, 10; Crawford, 9; Dane, 37; Douglas, 18; Dunn, 12; Forest, 2; second district of Grant, 12; Green, 12; Iowa, 13; Jackson, 11; Juneau, 12; Kewaunee, 4; second district of LaCrosse, 10; Lafayette, 11; first district of Marinette, 1; Milwaukee, 58 $\frac{1}{3}$; Monroe, 15; Oneida, 7; Polk, 11; Portage, 13; Price, 7; Racine, 24; Richland, 10; Sawyer, 3; second district of LaCrosse, 10; Lafayette, 11; first district of Marinette, 13; making for LaFollette 515 $\frac{1}{3}$.

Now as to the contests. There were contests in the following counties and districts: Ashland, 12; first district of Dodge, 9; second district of Dodge, 10; first district of Eau Claire, 9; second district of Eau Claire, 9; first district of Grant, 11; Oconto, 11; St. Croix, 13; Milwaukee, second ward, 5; fourth ward, 6; fourteenth ward, 3; seventeenth ward, 5, and eighteenth ward, 5; making in all the 108 contested delegates.

Before we examine these contests it may be well to state a few other facts. On May 11 the state central committee gave notice that it would meet at Madison on Tuesday, May 17, at 9 o'clock a. m., to pass upon the delegates to the state convention.

Let us examine briefly the contests where the state central committee recommended that the stalwart delegates be given seats in the convention. In the assembly district convention for the first district of Dodge county—it was claimed that the LaFollette men had 31 delegates to 29 of the opposition, without counting proxies. A motion was made that no proxies be allowed, which was declared out of order by the stalwart chairman. It was further claimed that no legal caucuses were held in three towns which sent stal-

wart delegates; that if these delegates had not been permitted to take part in the convention the LaFollette men would have been in the majority, and I think these claims were true, but notwithstanding that, the state central committee voted unanimously to place the stalwart delegates on the temporary roll of the convention. This added nine to the Baensch vote.

To the assembly district convention in the second district of Dodge county 42 delegates were elected—22 in favor of LaFollette and 20 in opposition.

At the convention the vote stood 23 for Baensch delegates and 19 for LaFollette delegates. How was this change brought about? By three delegates who proved false to the men who elected them. The only excuse given for this change was that a delegate had the right to change his mind. Well, the state central committee gave these votes to Mr. Baensch, and the people were cheated out of their rights.

The stalwart delegates from the fourth, fourteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth wards of the city of Milwaukee were seated by the committee, 19 in all. No delegates from the second ward were seated, because of the frauds committed at the caucus.

In the St. Croix convention there was a mix-up. I have read carefully the statements made by parties at the Opera House caucus, or convention as some are pleased to call it, and find it very difficult to determine which party had the majority of the delegates in the county convention. One of the parties there said, "our voting strength was at least 35 to their 34," while the LaFollette men claimed they had a majority of two. I suppose it was hard for the committee to determine the matter and so they concluded to divide the delegation between both parties, as is often done, and by the action they added $6\frac{1}{2}$ to the LaFollette column. This the stalwart members of the committee did not agree to. They insisted on placing the whole 13 stalwart delegates on the temporary roll, and recommending that the 13 stalwart delegates be given permanent seats in the convention. This, as I have said, gave $43\frac{1}{2}$ votes in the convention to the Baensch vote, making it in all 357 $\frac{1}{6}$.

Now what about the other contests? In Ashland county the LaFollette men elected 17 delegates to the county convention and the opposition only 14. The county was then for LaFollette. Two of the LaFollette delegates remained away from the convention, for what reason does not appear. It does appear, however, that neither of them ever informed any of the other LaFollette delegates that they would not attend the convention. The 13 LaFollette delegates attended the convention and the 14 in opposition

also. A ballot was taken for delegates. The stalwart chairman announced it 15 votes for stalwart delegates and 14 for LaFollette delegates. The 15 LaFollette men immediately arose and insisted that there was a mistake, or fraud, but they could get no redress. The 15 men organized into a convention and elected the 12 delegates they had voted for before, and made affidavits to the facts. If the chairman or teller had made a mistake in the count it ought to have been corrected, of course. Well, the state central committee decided to put these 12 LaFollette delegates from Ashland county on the temporary roll of the convention, which was clearly right.

In the convention for the second district of Dodge county, the total number of delegates under the call was 89. Legal notices of the caucuses in three precincts were not given, which reduced the number to 80, and of this number the LaFollette men had 43 and the opposition 37. On a vote for temporary chairman a division was called for and refused. A demand for a ballot was refused by the stalwart chairman. A committee on credentials was appointed which refused to give the LaFollette men a hearing. The LaFollette men withdrew and organized a convention and elected delegates to the state convention and these ten delegates were placed upon the temporary roll of the convention by the state central committee.

The next in order is the first district of Eau Claire county. It was clearly shown that the LaFollette delegates were in the majority in this convention. The minority began to bulldoze. It was almost a free fight. The majority withdrew to an adjoining room and there elected the delegates, and these nine delegates were placed upon the temporary roll of the convention by the unanimous vote of the state central committee.

Under the call for the assembly district convention of Grant county 94 delegates were to be elected. When they came to the convention they stood 52 for LaFollette and 42 for the opposition. In the caucus at Potosi there was a tie vote, and the parties agreed to divide the delegates, four for LaFollette and three for Baensch, and that was done, and these delegates attended the convention. Afterward a young man made affidavit that he was not 21 years of age and that he had voted for the LaFollette delegates. If true, and he had not voted at all, then seven Baensch delegates would have been elected from the town of Potosi, and the convention would have stood 48 for LaFollette delegates and 46 for the opposition.

To overcome this majority the stalwarts contended that Beetown should have two votes in the convention, although the town was

entitled to six. The town of Beetown at its caucus elected six LaFollette delegates and the caucus authorized those present at the convention, in case of vacancy, to cast the full vote of the town. Only two of the six attended the convention and they claimed the right to cast the full vote of the town. This right was granted to them by the convention. If the stalwarts could have deprived the town of Beetown of four of its votes they would have had the majority of the convention. These were the facts as to the Grant county convention. The state central committee voted unanimously to seat the LaFollette delegates from this district. And the committee did right.

In Oconto county, under the call, 88 delegates were to be elected. The south ward of the city of Oconto was entitled to six delegates in the convention, but there was really no election of delegates in that ward. A stalwart teller in that ward swept the ballots off the table onto the floor where they became mixed with other ballots. When they were picked up it was found that the number of ballots did not agree with the number of names on the tally sheet. The chairman and secretary of the caucus refused to certify to the election of any delegates, stating that it was impossible for them to tell who had the majority of the votes. But the stalwarts sent a delegation to represent this ward, and they were permitted to take part in the convention. At a caucus of LaFollette delegates held only a few minutes before the county convention met there were present and represented by proxy $45\frac{1}{2}$ votes, a clear majority of the whole number. During the interim the stalwarts in some way induced a LaFollette delegate holding two proxies to leave and not take part in the convention and another LaFollette delegate who took part in the said caucus was induced to leave the administration side and join the opposition.

That disposed of four LaFollette votes. At the convention the stalwart chairman of the county committee called the convention to order, and refused a ballot for temporary chairman, although there were two candidates.

A committee on credentials was appointed by him in the same way, every one of which was a stalwart. In one town a caucus was held on due notice at which three LaFollette delegates were elected. Another caucus was held at another part of the town, without notice, at which three opposition delegates were elected, and the stalwart committee on credentials voted to seat the last three in the convention. In another town a caucus was duly held at which one LaFollette delegate was elected, and there was a tie as to the other three. After the result was announced the stalwarts held another caucus and pretended to elect three stal-

ward delegates and one LaFollette delegate, and these delegates the committee on credentials attempted to seat in the convention. Another town was only entitled to two delegates but they seated three in the convention, and all of them were stalwarts. And the committee reported in favor of seating six delegates from the ward above mentioned where there was no election of delegates. And then a ballot was refused on the adoption of the report of the committee. Then the LaFollette delegates withdrew and held a convention and by a vote of $41\frac{1}{2}$ elected the delegates which were seated by the state central committee in the state convention. It is clear that Oconto county was rightly placed in the LaFollette column.

As I have already said, $6\frac{1}{2}$ delegates from St. Croix county were given to LaFollette, making $59\frac{1}{2}$, which added to the $515\frac{1}{3}$ make $574\frac{5}{6}$, to $485\frac{1}{6}$ for both Cook and Baensch.

But suppose you say that you think the opposition was entitled to St. Croix county. Well, and let us give to them the benefit of all doubts as to Oconto county and the second district of Dodge, making $27\frac{1}{2}$ in all, and add that number to their $485\frac{1}{6}$, making $512\frac{2}{3}$, and even add to that the five from the second ward of Milwaukee (to which they are in no way entitled), making a total of $517\frac{2}{3}$, and they are still 40 short of what they claim they had at their convention at the opera house. That would still leave the LaFollette ticket $547\frac{1}{3}$, fourteen more than a majority of the whole 1,065.

This only gives to the LaFollette ticket, of the contested delegates, Ashland, 12; first district of Eau Claire, 9, and first district of Grant, 11; and no fair man will say that would not be just and honest. All these $547\frac{1}{3}$ delegates remained in the gymnasium convention and voted for the LaFollette ticket. I therefore concluded that the LaFollette ticket was fairly nominated and entitled to the support of the republican party of the state.

CHAPTER XXIII

The Opera House Caucus.

RUMORS OF POSSIBLE RIOTING—EXTRAORDINARY PRECAUTIONS TAKEN—GREAT EXCITEMENT IN MADISON—STALWARTS HOLD “CAUCUS” MEETING IN OPERA HOUSE—FIERY SPEECH BY M. G. JEFFRIS—STALWARTS MARCH TO GYMNASIUM—MUST RUN GAUNTLET OF GUARDS—INCIDENTS OF OPENING OF CONVENTION.

RUMORS of possible violence at the state convention were current long before the convention day arrived. The fact that the stalwarts for some time had leased the Fuller opera house at Madison and retained attorneys to safeguard their legal rights indicated their determination upon an aggressive course. Physical clashes had occurred at some of the caucuses and conventions, notably at Janesville, and many regarded similar outbreaks at the state convention as more than possible.

Because of this fact and the general excitement prevailing, great crowds of rival partisans and interested politicians poured into Madison the day before the convention. Practically every incoming train had its crowded extra coaches. Excited throngs filled the hotel lobbies and streets, and the air was charged with the electricity of controversy and apprehension.

The action of the state central committee in seating a majority of LaFollette delegates fanned into flame the discontent which was consuming many of the ardent opponents of the administration. Accordingly when the stalwarts, in conformity with their call, met in “caucus” in the opera house that evening the feeling of apprehension and excitement was heightened.

This opera house gathering was one of the remarkable features of the campaign that year and wholly unprecedented in state political history.

Never before had a factional body of such magnitude met on the eve of a state convention and in open and defiant speech practically declared war to the knife on an opposing faction. It had none of the characteristics of a caucus; the slates had already been made up; there was no secrecy; the doors were thrown wide open to the public. Obviously the purpose of the meeting was to give vent to the feelings raging in the bosoms of an exasperated opposition and to create, if possible, a wave of prejudice against the administration. When the meeting was called to order by T. W. Spence of Milwaukee, the house was filled with an eager, expectant throng. A sort of official tone was given the occasion by the presence in the boxes of former Governors Upham and Scofield, Federal Judge Bunn and other notables. Spence proposed for chairman of the meeting M. G. Jeffris of Janesville, who met the expectations of the occasion by delivering a most fiery and scathing denunciation of Governor LaFollette and the administration. The state central committee was also roundly scored and the speaker hinted broadly of rioting and violence in the convention the following day were the "rights of any delegates overridden by the administration."

After a number of other fervent speakers had been heard the gathering adopted amid resounding cheers a resolution that "the anti-third-term delegates should meet at the opera house at 11 o'clock the next morning and march in a body to the gymnasium and demand their rights." It boded ill for a peaceful morrow.

In the course of the day a mysterious badge inscribed "Hiker" had made its appearance and soon came to be generally worn by stalwart delegates and adherents. Its import none seemed to know. The stalwarts explained afterwards that the term was borrowed from the army in the Philippines and meant "one who walks," hence one who favored walking out of the convention; but the ad-

ministration leaders regarded the badge with more suspicion. They professed to fear it had a more sinister significance which would later develop.

Promptly at the appointed hour the following morning the stalwart delegates and other "hikers" formed in line four abreast in the street in front of the opera house, and with two American flags at their head marched to the gymnasium nearly a mile away.

It was on arriving at their destination at the gymnasium that they were first impressed in a manner calculated to sober any mutinous feelings that might be burning within them.

In anticipation of trouble and possible rioting, the most extraordinary precautions had been taken by the administration forces. Adolph H. Kayser of Madison, a man of powerful physique and undoubted courage, had been appointed sergeant-at-arms for the convention. He annexed to himself a regiment of assistants and transformed the gymnasium into a scene not unlike a penal institution.

A powerful wire fence eight feet high was built square across the hall to separate the delegates and spectators and prevent their "mixing up" in case of trouble. The north half of the hall was assigned to the delegates. Spectators were admitted at the regular front entrance at the south, but the delegates were directed to a smaller door on the west side. Extending out some distance from the side door was built a runway through which delegates had to pass in single file. The runway also extended up the stairs to an inner door, and eleven feet into the building. These preparations had been made in the face of the protest of Chief of Police H. C. Baker of Madison, who not only refused to supply the police force desired, but compelled Kayser to loosen certain doors that had been padlocked and braced. A long controversy between Baker and administration representatives

occurred later on in the campaign in which affidavits were freely exchanged over these matters. The stalwart press roundly denounced the precautions taken as an insult to the delegates and the *Milwaukee Sentinel* painted a lurid editorial picture of the dire possibilities had a fire broken out during the convention. At each side of the outer end of the runway stood several brawny guards to regulate the inflowing stream of humanity, while a brigade of deputies, sheriffs and special guards stretched on each side up the steps to the inner door where were still others acting as ushers. Bull-throated giants from near and far had been drafted into service. There was Evan Lewis, the famous strangler and one-time champion wrestler of the world; Fred Kull, the towering center rush of the university football team a decade before; Levi Pollard of iron frame; Ed. Vanderboom, "Dick" Remp, "Norsky" Larson and other renowned football warriors; besides present and past peace officers, blacksmiths, etc., of strong arm and tried courage. It is said there were also fifty students from the athletic teams of the university inside and outside the building ready to spring at a signal to take a hand in suppressing any rioting that might occur. A couple of these guards had done time for various offenses in the past which later provided the opposition with much food for merriment and gave Chief of Police Baker an excuse for sending home eight of his men whom he said he would not humiliate by having them associate with jailbirds and wife-beaters.

Tickets countersigned by the state central committee were required of both spectators and delegates and as each side charged the other with having printed counterfeit tickets over night everyone admitted was "man-handled," as the stalwarts declared, by these guards, much to the resentment of many dignified party war-horses of the past whose entrance upon other conventions

they recalled had been marked with pomp and circumstance, with deference and salvos from the admiring crowds. What a pitiful and humiliating contrast this! But swallowing their pride they fell out of ranks and—some with smiles, others with flushed faces and sharp words of censure—filed singly into the building. The stern spirit of the proceedings was shown when one, Colonel Boyle, was held up by “Ed” Tracy, a guard. Chief of Police Baker stepped forward and said, “This is Colonel Boyle of the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul railroad.” “That’s no recommend,” retorted Tracy. Not until Sergeant Kayser interceded was Boyle admitted. Many of the delegates who had been refused seats by the state central committee sought admission to the delegate section and some of them created “scenes” when denied entrance, but were summarily hustled from the entrance by the resolute officials. Such were the circumstances of the opening of this memorable and last republican state convention in Wisconsin.

CHAPTER XXIV

Gymnasium Convention.

INTENSE INTEREST TAKEN IN PROCEEDINGS—FEARS OF OUTBREAK AT OPENING—STALWART LEADER JEFFRIS OVERRULED—GREAT DEMONSTRATION AT CHAIRMAN LENROOT'S MENTION OF LAFOLLETTE'S NAME—THE ROSENBERRY INCIDENT—FIRST TEST VOTE GIVES ADMINISTRATION MAJORITY—STALWART LEADERS PROTEST AND COOK PLEADS FOR PARTY PEACE—JEFFRIS LEADS BOLT OF BAENSCH DELEGATES FROM HALL—COOK DELEGATES REMAIN.

LONG before the stroke of noon every available part of room in the great convention hall at the university gymnasium was occupied by an eager throng consumed with expectancy, curiosity, apprehension. The great drama was about to open. The crisis in the party was at hand and the supreme hour in LaFollette's great fight. Would he have the convention in hand; was the party finally to destroy itself; would there be violence and a test of physical strength between the excited partisans now under such high tension of belligerency? These were among the questions each asked himself and his neighbor. Mrs. LaFollette and her children and a few friends came in and amid a hearty round of applause took seats on the stage. As with the utmost serenity they sat and surveyed the flag-draped hall and the scene before them many trembled for their safety in the event of an outbreak.

Was Mrs. LaFollette unaware of the more than possible danger of her situation, they asked? Surely one so intelligent and in such close touch with the developments of the last few hours could not be. Perhaps because of the very danger of a physical struggle she had bravely resolved to project herself into the situation that the influence of her presence might to that degree re-

strain the passions threatening to burst their bounds. A more timid woman would have shrunk from the sacrifice. Whatever the facts, it cannot be denied that the presence of Mrs. LaFollette and the other women on the stage had a sobering influence upon the great gathering. It is perhaps not too much to say that but for her resolution to attend the proceedings factional rivalry might have gone to more unfortunate lengths than it did.

The venerable Chairman Bryant, imperturbable as destiny, also was an object of solicitude as he moved about arranging the final setting.

The university students, who hung from windows and girders all over the building, alone seemed possessed of a spirit of levity. Periodically the Wisconsin yell and other calls would be given in resounding fashion, interspersed with this adaptation of a then popular football song:

Cheer! Boys, cheer! LaFollette's got the ball!
U-rah-ah! Oh, won't they take a fall?
For when we hit their line they'll have no line at all!
There'll be a hot time in Wisconsin tonight, my baby!

The newspapermen, of whom hundreds seemed to have been drawn to the scene from near and far, were feverishly alert. A series of long picnic tables, with seats on both sides and stretching clear across the hall, had been set up for them in front of the speakers' platform at the north end, and a stream of bulletins flowed from the building long before the convention opened and as the drama progressed toward the first clash of arms.

Practically from the close of Chaplain Updike's prayer the convention was in an uproar, and only the extraordinary police precautions taken and the firmness and fairness of Chairman Lenroot prevented a physical clash. The prayer ended, General George E. Bryant, as chairman of the state central committee, announced that the committee had passed upon the credentials of the dele-

gates and that the secretary would call the roll. Mr. Jeffris, the stalwart floor leader, at once protested and demanded that the convention be first temporarily organized. Asked to make a motion to dispense with the reading, he declared:

We do not want to dispense with it; but the order of business is to appoint a temporary chairman.

Mr. Jeffris was declared out of order by Chairman Bryant and the roll of delegates as made up by the state central committee was read, following which General Bryant announced the selection by the committee of I. L. Lenroot of Superior for chairman of the convention, C. O. Marsh of Antigo for secretary and Adolph H. Kayser of Madison for sergeant-at-arms. These were then duly installed without dissent. Mr. Lenroot then gave his address. This was a ringing, militant effort, in strong defense of the administration. His first mention of LaFollette's name precipitated a demonstration that lasted nearly a half hour, according to the hostile *State Journal's* account.

At only one point may this address be said to have struck an unresponsive chord with both friend and foe. In opening his address Chairman Lenroot said:

This great gathering of the republican party of Wisconsin will be memorable in many ways; it will be memorable as the last republican convention in Wisconsin for the nomination of state officers.

So tense was the feeling of battle, so eager the spirit of conflict, that when he uttered the prophetic words, a secret feeling of disappointment that such occasions were passing seized upon the hearts of many of his hearers, in spite of the applause which greeted the declaration.

Shortly before Mr. Lenroot began his speech M. B. Rosenberry of Wausau, a stalwart member of the state central committee, took a seat on the stage just behind Mr. Lenroot. Immediately three husky young guards of

the convention took seats about Mr. Rosenberry, practically surrounding him. The significance of this latter movement was perhaps not grasped by the great assemblage, but it was a precaution taken by the administration managers to forestall what was believed to be a plot to take over the machinery of the convention by force. In other words, it was believed that the closing of Mr. Lenroot's speech was to be the signal for Mr. Rosenberry to step forward, take the gavel from Mr. Lenroot by force and precipitate a riot at once. If such were the scheme it was quickly nipped, for scarcely had Mr. Rosenberry risen to his feet before he was forced back into his chair by the guards about him. Only when he finally announced that his purpose was simply to ask the substitution of the minority report for the majority was he permitted, at the suggestion of General Bryant, to come forward.

The stalwart view of this episode and the explanation of Mr. Rosenberry's action are given in Mr. Philipp's history as follows:

Before the convention was organized M. B. Rosenberry, a member of the minority of the state central committee, made a request of the chairman, General Bryant, that he, Rosenberry, be recognized by the temporary chairman of the convention for the purpose of presenting a minority report of the state central committee, signed by six members. He was told to make arrangements with Mr. Lenroot, who was to be temporary chairman, which he did, and was given a promise that he would be recognized immediately after the close of the temporary chairman's address. Mr. Rosenberry took a seat on the platform eight or ten feet to the left of, and behind the stand at which Mr. Lenroot stood when he addressed the convention. As he sat down he was surrounded by three persons, strangers to him, each a noteworthy example of physical prowess and each wearing a badge that indicated that he was an assistant to the sergeant-at-arms. These three men refused to allow Mr. Rosenberry to move or change his position at any time, but forcibly held him in his seat until Mr. Lenroot had finished his address. At the appointed time Mr. Rosenberry arose to his feet, with his guards still clustered about him, although he had ex-

plained to them who he was and that he had the consent of General Bryant and Mr. Lenroot to his presence. In spite of this explanation, and although Mr. Rosenberry had several times requested his guards to cease interfering with his freedom, they persisted in their surveillance over his acts.

It may be added that when Mr. Rosenberry had completed the reading of his report and attempted to move that it be substituted for the majority report, he was seized by his guards and forced into his chair. Mr. Rosenberry presented the minority report of the committee which he read.

In its official call for the convention the state central committee had requested that all delegates have their credentials signed by the chairmen and secretaries of their respective counties, without specifying that they be also signed by the chairmen and secretaries of the conventions electing them. Later in the course of the controversy the majority of the committee explained that it had assumed as a matter of course that the credentials would be signed by the chairmen and secretaries of the conventions, and also that no credentials were to be regarded as too sacred to go behind if necessary.

Nevertheless the minority determined that its policy should be to insist on the seating of all delegates bearing credentials signed by the officers of the county committees regardless of any other signatures.

The minority report stated in part:

We are of the opinion that the duty of the committee in making up the temporary roll for the state convention is limited to placing upon said roll all delegates who have been certified by the chairman and secretary of the respective county committees. . . . That the committee in the exercise of its functions as a committee upon credentials to hear contests has no power except to ascertain the facts and report the same, with its conclusions thereon, to the convention for its action. . . . That the act of the committee, as set out in its report whereby it attempts to determine contests and deprive duly accredited delegates of their right to a seat in the convention, usurps the power of the convention itself, and deprives it of its right to determine the qualifications of its own members.

The report was further interesting from the fact that its signers who but a few hours before had unanimously agreed to the seating of the LaFollette delegates from the first districts in Eau Claire and Grant counties now reversed themselves and declared for the stalwart delegates from these districts.

Mr. Rosenberry was not permitted to enter upon a debate and L. H. Bancroft moved the adoption of the majority report. Mr. Rosenberry moved to substitute the minority report, but was declared out of order. A wrangle followed over this ruling and the chair appealed to A. R. Hall, who was present as a delegate.

"I think the chair is wrong in its ruling," said Mr. Hall; "it is proper to consider the minority report first."

Mr. Rosenberry then took the floor in support of his motion and attacked the action of the state central committee as arbitrary and unfair. Judge Bancroft followed with a fiery reply. "There never was a time in Wisconsin," he said, "when the majority report of the convention's regularly constituted committee on credentials was voted down. And it won't be today!" An equally fiery rejoinder came from Mr. Jeffris.

"I ask you LaFollette delegates," he shouted, "by what authority the gentleman from Richland knows how you are going to vote?"

Hisses and groans greeted the speaker, whereupon E. R. Hicks, the Cook leader, made a long and fervent plea for party peace.

"Oh, my friends in this party," he said, "I believe it is not too late to save ourselves. The handwriting—yes, it is upon the wall. Today your kingdom is divided and your scepter will go to another if you do this thing."

In conclusion Mr. Hicks moved, "that those persons be entitled to vote upon this question who hold certificates of election to this convention signed by the chairman and secretary of the county committees as the law

JUDICIAL CIRCUITS OF WISCONSIN

Showing the Population of the State
by Counties—Census of 1900

Total Population 2,069,042



Republican caucus map 1904, dark counties carried by Stalwarts, as seated by state central committee and on first test vote

requires and that this convention herewith have submitted to it in detail every controverted judgment upon what shall be done without the vote of anybody interested."

Mr. Bancroft made the point of order against the Hicks motion and was sustained by the chair, who quoted a like ruling by McKinley at the republican national convention in 1892, whereupon Hicks appealed from the chair and brought on the first test vote.

After some preliminary skirmishing and an attempt by Mr. Jeffris to have the whole matter re-referred to the state central committee the previous question was finally ordered on the sustaining of the chair.

Amid breathless silence the roll proceeded. The first crucial test had come and while all realized that the administration had seated a majority of delegates the question arose in the minds of many whether under the fierce passions aroused and the determined onslaughts of the stalwarts all would stand firm. Were the chair to be overruled it were difficult to imagine the extent to which things might go. Hundreds of pencils at the press table and throughout the building became immediately busy keeping a tally of the vote. Before the roll was ended a mighty wave of applause burst over the hall and continued for several minutes. The chair had been sustained. The administration had won in the first test and realizing the moral value of such victory its representatives were jubilant.

The vote resulted, ayes, 574 5-6; noes, 485 1-6. Then after overruling obstructive motions made by T. W. Spence and General F. C. Winkler of Milwaukee, the chair put the question of the substitution of the minority report for the majority so far as related to Ashland county. The motion failed, 485 1-6 to 562 5-6. Evidently the administration was to have a substantial majority throughout the proceedings.

Then one by one the other contested counties were similarly disposed of, Dodge, Eau Claire, Grant, Oconto and St. Croix, and after the minority had been voted down upon all of them the process was reversed and the majority report upon each adopted. At each ballot Mr. Jeffris or some other stalwart delegate would arise and formally protest against counting the votes of delegates who had been protested (by the stalwarts), but the steam roller went remorselessly on to the end.

The last contested delegation seated, George B. Hudnall of Superior moved that the temporary organization be made permanent. It was now 5:45 o'clock, although under the great excitement of the occasion many delegates had utterly forgotten the flight of time and confessed afterwards that temporarily they had imagined it was still morning as many of them had eaten nothing since breakfast. The time for the threatened bolt had arrived; to have participated further would have amounted practically to a concession of the regularity of the proceedings.

Accordingly before the roll call was ordered Mr. Jeffris jumped from his seat and shouted: "I ask the privilege of announcing that all anti-third-term delegates in this convention are requested to meet in caucus at the Fuller opera house at 8 o'clock tonight!" A tremendous uproar followed this announcement, with great cheering by Baensch delegates and hisses and groans from the La-Follette supporters. The Cook men sat stolidly in their seats. Secretary Marsh began calling the roll. Led by Mr. Jeffris, the Baensch delegates then began leaving the hall, Mr. Jeffris' parting shot as he passed out of the door being, "I protest that this convention is not legally organized."

W. C. Cowling of Oshkosh also arose and declared that it was the wish of Senators Spooner and Quarles that their names be not presented to this convention "for

delegates to the republican national convention." Shouts of "Don't Worry!" and "No Danger!" greeted this announcement.

The Cook delegates remained in their seats, apparently awaiting the word of their leader, Mr. Hicks. Obtaining the floor while the bolt was in progress Hicks made a long and fervent plea for cooler counsel and harmony. "Oh, my countrymen!" he said, "we cannot lightly do this thing. * * * If we must do it let the undoing of republicanism come from without and not from within."

Hicks also deplored the bolt, saying amid cheers:

My friends, I speak with no other design or purpose than to simply justify myself and the men who believe with me in this convention, and the candidate whose interest we espouse and here declare to be paramount to all factions. I am here to say to you that no other convention, no other place, no other aggregation of so-called representatives of the republican party demands, nor will receive, the approval or co-operation of that portion of this convention which is here in the interest of republicanism today. . . . I wish here and now, and I must ask your indulgence for a moment—here and now. I wish to say in behalf of Mr. Cook and the delegation in this convention, that if this motion prevails we believe that it is actuated by and consummated through a greater desire for the perpetuity of factionalism than the exaltation of republicanism, and that a convention so organized is not a fair representation as it comes from the hands of the people, and while we will not bolt, we will be true, we are not—I am speaking for this handful in this convention—we are not political hypocrites.

Mr. Hicks also fought for time by moving a recess until evening and later until the next morning, but failed and Mr. Hudnall pressed his motion on permanent organization.

This failure of the Cook delegates to leave the hall showed the lack of a complete understanding between the allies and was the big tactical blunder of the stalwarts.

By remaining to vote they thus helped to permanently

organize the convention by a vote so great as to put its regularity beyond any question. No other convention could now be held without adjournment by a majority vote from the gymnasium to some other place, a fact privately admitted by the stalwart attorneys in the litigation following. To a convention, as to a court, four things are essential, time and place, delegates and officers. All these qualifications the gymnasium convention had obtained through regular channels. Thus by remaining and voting on the question of organization, and then finally joining forces with the original seceders, the Cook men became greater bolters than the more consistent Jeffris following. After the bolt the vote on permanent organization stood 574 5-6 to 129 2-3, the latter figure representing the Cook strength.

On motion of H. W. Chynoweth of Madison, the chair then appointed the committee on resolutions which was headed by Mr. Chynoweth. Four stalwarts, including Charles F. Pfister of Milwaukee, were included in this committee, but took no part in its proceedings.

Then came up the question of adjournment for the day. Not a few delegates favored remaining in the hall all night lest the seceders, like some Latin American revolutionary army, return under cover of darkness and capture the building. Mr. Bancroft was among those fearing such ruse. However, Mr. Chynoweth believed that with a small force left on guard the hall would be safe and moved adjournment until the next morning that the committee on resolutions might have time to complete its work. The motion prevailed and an eventful day in Wisconsin's political history closed at this point, as far as this particular convention was concerned.

CHAPTER XXV

The Opera House Convention.

FLOOR LEADER JEFFRIS AGAIN ATTACKS ADMINISTRATION—CONVENTION OPENS AMID GREAT ENTHUSIASM—BAENSCH WITHDRAWS AND COOK PLACED IN NOMINATION—"BIG GUNS" OF PARTY HEARD—OVATION FOR SPOONER.

WHEN the stalwart "caucus" opened at 9 o'clock that evening the opera house was jammed to the doors with an expectant throng. Amid a tumult of applause General F. C. Winkler of Milwaukee called the meeting to order and appropriately nominated for chairman Mr. Jeffris, the stalwart floor leader at the gymnasium convention. In accepting the chairmanship Mr. Jeffris fired his hearers to continued enthusiasm with a speech similar to the one he had made the night before from the same platform.

For instance, on the subject of game wardens, he said: "We believe game laws should be administered for the protection of wild game and not the shooting down of tame citizens." Col. William J. Anderson was made secretary of the convention and with the naming of committees on credentials and resolutions adjournment was taken until 9 o'clock next morning, while a list of delegates was made up in various irregular ways, including the drafting of distant visitors to the city.

Next day the convention proper opened. The morning was spent in an extended presentation of the administration's "caucus steals," Spencer Haven of St. Croix county, and others being heard. Each speaker detailed the proceedings in his particular locality and justified the stalwart course pursued. This relieved Chairman Jeffris, whose voice appeared to be completely gone after his

efforts of the two previous evenings. Then came the afternoon session.

With a brigade of the "big guns" of the party present to stir the assemblage to the highest pitch of enthusiasm, this afternoon meeting satisfied all the orthodox requirements of the old-fashioned republican state conventions. And indeed it was a most remarkable gathering. With the two United States senators present, two former governors of the state, several members of congress and many former and present members of the legislature and state officers, well might the shades of the departed fathers have wondered how there could be another republican party in the state. A militant enthusiastic spirit marked the meeting from the beginning. "The chair has been informed," remarked Chairman Jeffris, "that there is a bolting convention in session somewhere in the state, but this convention has nothing to do with it."

Interesting situations came on apace, the first being caused by the sudden appearance of Judge Baensch on the stage in withdrawal of his candidacy for the nomination for governor. The action of the Cook delegates in not promptly leaving the gymnasium at the word of Mr. Jeffris, the leader, the afternoon before had threatened somewhat the harmony of the allies, without which there could be no hope, and Baensch had quickly shown the white feather. In order to win the Cook delegation to the bolt, which was absolutely necessary for appearances now, if nothing more, the Baensch leaders had been compelled the evening before to withdraw their candidate and promise the nomination to Cook. On this condition alone would the Cook men come over.

"Sorrowfully, but dutifully," said Baensch, "in the interests of harmony; in the interests of strength, I release the delegates that have been instructed for me and promise my loyal support to the nominee of this convention."

Then Mr. Hicks stepped forward, smiling radiantly "Cook!" he began. (Applause).

"S. A. Cook!" he continued. (More applause.)

"Governor S. A. Cook of the state of Wisconsin!" (Great applause.)

Cook was nominated by acclamation, brought before the convention, introduced by Mr. Hicks as the next governor of Wisconsin, and made a very short and conventional speech of acceptance devoid of any fire whatever.

In the meantime the platform had been reported by General Winkler. This declaration was an interesting study in connection with the more defiant pronouncement issued at the gymnasium. After devoting five planks to national subjects and declaring that corporations were creatures of the state and subject to regulation it had this to say of the issues of the hour:

All legislative regulation of public service corporations should be characterized by a spirit of justice to the people on the one hand and to the great interests which these corporations represent on the other. It is oftentimes a problem of difficulty to make that fair adjustment which justice requires. . . .

We favor the enactment of a law creating a railway commission of not more than three members to be elected at the spring election with full powers to investigate conditions, to originate actions (either upon complaint or its own initiative) and to enforce (in the courts and by such other means as may be provided by law) a strict observance of legal restrictions upon the exercise of corporate power.

The last legislature enacted and submitted to the people to be voted upon at the general election a proposed primary election law. This law proposes a radical change in the nomination procedure of all parties and affects every elector in the exercise of one of his functions, and we approve of the action of the republican senate in declining to put into immediate operation by a majority vote of one party such a law, without first giving an opportunity to all the voters of the state, each voter upon his own responsibility and conscience, to pass upon it at the polls. It has passed the platform stage. If it shall not be the will of the people to do away with all the conventions in the future we favor the enactment

of such legislation as shall provide specifically for the election and accrediting of delegates and the legal effect which shall be given to credentials duly executed, to the end that it shall be impossible for any power but the convention itself to overrule the *prima facie* title of delegates and turn preliminarily a majority into a minority.

The climax of enthusiasm came when C. C. Rogers appeared upon the platform escorting Senators Spooner and Quarles and former Governors Upham and Scofield. With one wild shout the delegates rose to their feet in a prolonged demonstration, with yells of "Spooner!" "Spooner!" rising above the din. The demonstration was repeated again and again as one after another of the giants present, Spooner, Quarles, Scofield, Upham, Congressmen Babcock, Minor and Barney, State Senator John M. Whitehead and others stepped forward and gave their endorsement to the party secession and pledged their support of the movement. It was a "war meeting" rather than a political love feast, a crossing of the Rubicon which left no hope of settling the issues between the two rival forces save a supreme test of strength.

The speech of Senator Spooner was interesting from the fact that in part it might well have been mistaken in the reading for a LaFollette address. "This work," he said, "has just begun. Remember you are fighting for principle. Tell your constituents what is involved in it; tell them that you are fighting for the dearest popular birthright of the people, the opportunity to be heard in the conduct of their own business. * * * Gentlemen, this convention is not inspired by the personal ambition of anyone in it (Great applause). It is not inspired by a struggle for power (Applause). It is inspired by loyalty to representative government (Great applause)." Continuing he said:

"Men sometimes of late years have repudiated the idea that we have had for the last forty years in Wisconsin representative government (Laughter); that we have

had, they suggest, government by corporations. False as it all is, it is so monumental in its impudence as to be absolutely bewildering. There is one thing the people will not have, and that is, government by committee. (Applause.)”

With the completion of the state ticket at another crowded evening session and a final speech by Chairman Jeffris, the convention was over and the members went forth to prosecute the war to which they had now irrevocably committed themselves. The struggle was on and apparently to a finish.

Late that night a tall gentleman under great mental stress as a result of the excitement of the hour paused in a bewildered way in the middle of the street. Hailing a passing messenger boy he offered him a dime to direct him to the Avenue hotel, but a half block or more around the corner. It was S. A. Cook, the man who had just been named for governor.



House in which LaFollette was born,
Primrose, Wis.

CHAPTER XXVI

Gymnasium Convention Concluded.

LAFOLLETTE AND OTHER STATE OFFICERS RENOMINATED—INTERESTING INCIDENT IN CONNECTION WITH GOVERNOR'S ACCEPTANCE—AGGRESSIVE CAMPAIGN URGED—OBSERVATIONS ON DEFECTIONS FROM LAFOLLETTE.

A SPIRIT of grim determination marked the proceedings of the gymnasium convention the second morning. The great hall was crowded. Confirmed in fealty to their cause by the extraordinary turn of affairs, the delegates were in aggressive mood.

The platform as reported by Chairman Chynoweth was adopted with ringing cheers, following which Governor LaFollette was placed in nomination in a masterly and eulogistic speech by James A. Frear of Hudson. A dozen orators, one after the other, rose upon their chairs and vied in tributary seconding speeches. The governor was unanimously renominated and brought before the convention by a committee headed by W. D. Connor of Marshfield, the other state officers being in the meantime also renominated on one motion.

The ovation accorded the governor by the great gathering was one long to be remembered by all present as was the powerful and impressive speech of acceptance that followed.

An incident in connection with this speech which might have escaped the notice of the casual observer, but which forms an interesting subject of psychological speculation occurred at the beginning.

It was a most solemn moment. A powerful element of the convention had seceded and with its going went the excitement of battle that had keyed up the great gathering. A feeling of sober reaction had set in; many trem-

bled at the thought of the possible consequences. It might lead to the disruption and defeat of the party in the state, to violence, even to assassination and the discredit of the commonwealth. The state officers had been renominated without opposition, but in spite of the enthusiastic demonstrations of approval at this consummation there was an undertow of depression in the assemblage. Then the governor was brought in by the committee and after the thunderous ovation accorded him had subsided, he said:

"Mr. Chairman—Gentlemen of the Convention, Fellow Citizens, Ladies and Gentlemen: I am informed officially by your committee that you, the representatives of the republican party in Wisconsin (applause), have nominated me as your candidate for governor of the state."

Then with a voice exquisitely cadenced and hypnotic with triumphant hope he slowly said: "I accept the nomination."

The magic utterance of the words touched a chord in every heart. Their tone betrayed a full consciousness of the solemnity of the occasion, an appreciation of what lay ahead; but there was a clarion note of hope in them, of challenge; an acceptance of the gage of battle; not a fierce and imbecile welcome of conflict, but a brave, serene, eager going forth. The great gathering felt its heavy load of doubts and fears, its perplexities and misgivings, suddenly lifted from its shoulders and willingly transferred by the leader, Ajax-like, to his own. By this very implied assumption of all responsibility for past trials and for ultimate success, he became ten times the more leader and idol, and a roar of applause, thunderous and long-continued, went up, making the great girders of the gymnasium vibrate to their farthest limit. These four brief words, so often the vapid commonplaces of dull men when named for office, he charged with the glow

of genius; they flashed of inspiration; vibrant, electric, they opened to the most sodden soul present, vistas of hope and shining fields of triumph. They breathed of a faith in the rectitude and ultimate triumph of the cause that by its very strength must perforce prevail. Impressive and convincing as were the words that followed, to his hearers the battle had been already won with his second sentence.

In concluding this speech Governor LaFollette said, according to a press report:

We must fight this out in Wisconsin now and here. (Applause.) Blind indeed the man who does not see, dull indeed the brain that does not comprehend, that the ballot is given on the faith of platform pledges, and that redeeming party pledges, keeping faith with the citizen, the representative in honor representing the voter, is the only means of preserving government by the people. Think of the struggle to secure just and equal taxation and nominations by direct vote of the people! Remember the broken promises, the violation of platform pledges, the boasting and defiance of the railroad lobby! Say what you will, representative government is on trial for its life in Wisconsin. If there be some citizens in this state whom passion and prejudice have so blinded that they do not see this clearly defined issue, it is not so outside of Wisconsin. Wherever you go in this country it is well understood that the issue in Wisconsin is the preservation of government by the people and for the people. (Applause.)

Whoever leads in such a movement, whatever band of men stand together bearing aloft the banners of the party, making this contest—one and all—they must expect to face violent misrepresentation and personal abuse of every conceivable character. That comes as a part of the sacrifice that must be made for the cause. But those who have borne the heat and burden of the battle in Wisconsin for eight years are veterans now. (Great applause.) They do not shirk from the combat. They do not hesitate to face the fire. (Applause.) They will not retreat nor lie down. (Applause and cheers.) Let it be known here today, and throughout the state and the country, that an adverse decision in any contest—either in caucuses, in conventions, or at the polls, when it comes to men who are following a conviction which lies at the foundation of government—cannot stop them. That we could meet with defeat time and again and simply grow stronger fighting the cause of

the right was proven in 1896 and in 1898. (Great applause.) And from 1900 down to this hour when the issues became clearly defined in the minds of the people there has never been any question as to where the overwhelming majority of the republicans of Wisconsin stood. They have testified their devotion in every convention down to this day. (Great applause; cries of Good! Good!)

I have already traveled much beyond the limits of a speech accepting a nomination for the governorship, but I wanted this convention and the people of the state to know that this fight begins today. (Great cheering.) That from this hour until the close of the polls on election day there shall be no halt and no stop. (Great applause, cries of Good! and cheers.)

Let me here and now declare to the convention, and through you to the republican party of Wisconsin, which you represent, (applause) that if again chosen to the high office of governor of this commonwealth, it shall be my constant endeavor faithfully to execute the will of the people and administer the duties of that office without fear or favor to any individual, or to any interest. (Prolonged applause and cheering, with delegates all on their feet.)

The night following this historic and last republican state convention in Wisconsin a characteristic and memorable scene was enacted in the governor's office in the capitol. From early evening until three o'clock the next morning the large ante-room of the executive office was jammed with an animated, exultant throng, the militant young republicanism of Wisconsin, come to felicitate together over the victorious issue of a great and trying battle and to repay its devotion to its beloved leader. Hundreds of delegates from the far corners of the state—the outposts of reform—many of whom were making their first visit to the capital—remained for the opportunity, so long anticipated, of at last meeting and shaking hands with LaFollette, and with them came hundreds of other visitors from far and near.

It soon became impossible for the governor to keep open house. The clamor and pressure for conferences and private interviews became irresistible, and under the exigencies of the unusual situation then prevailing he also felt it imperative to counsel with leaders from vari-

ous vital points. So he was forced into his private inner office and a corps of favored lieutenants delegated to "manage the crowd." Of these Speaker I. L. Lenroot became a sort of chief ambassador, being himself a popular hero of the hour as the fearless and masterful chairman of the great convention just closed. Among others having entree to the inner sanctum were N. P. Haugen, Lieutenant Governor James O. Davidson, State Chairman W. D. Connor, John L. Erickson of Superior, and J. Crawford Harper of Madison. Their instructions were to give everybody the glad hand, turn off office-seekers as diplomatically as possible and get everyone out of town with the maximum of good humor and enthusiasm for the cause possible. And this serves to recall one of the many incidents of the memorable night. Success had brought some of its inevitable results. LaFollette by this picturesque and dramatic victory, the climax so far of all his desperate fighting, was now more than ever the great state figure, and a dictator with power to make or deny political futures. Before men in such positions a large proportion of humanity is ever ready to prostrate itself, many through sheer devotion, others

ADMIT THE BEARER

*to the GYMNASIUM during
the sessions of the*

Republican State Convention

COMMENCING MAY 18, 1904

(SIDE ENTRANCE)

A Seat on the Stage No.

196

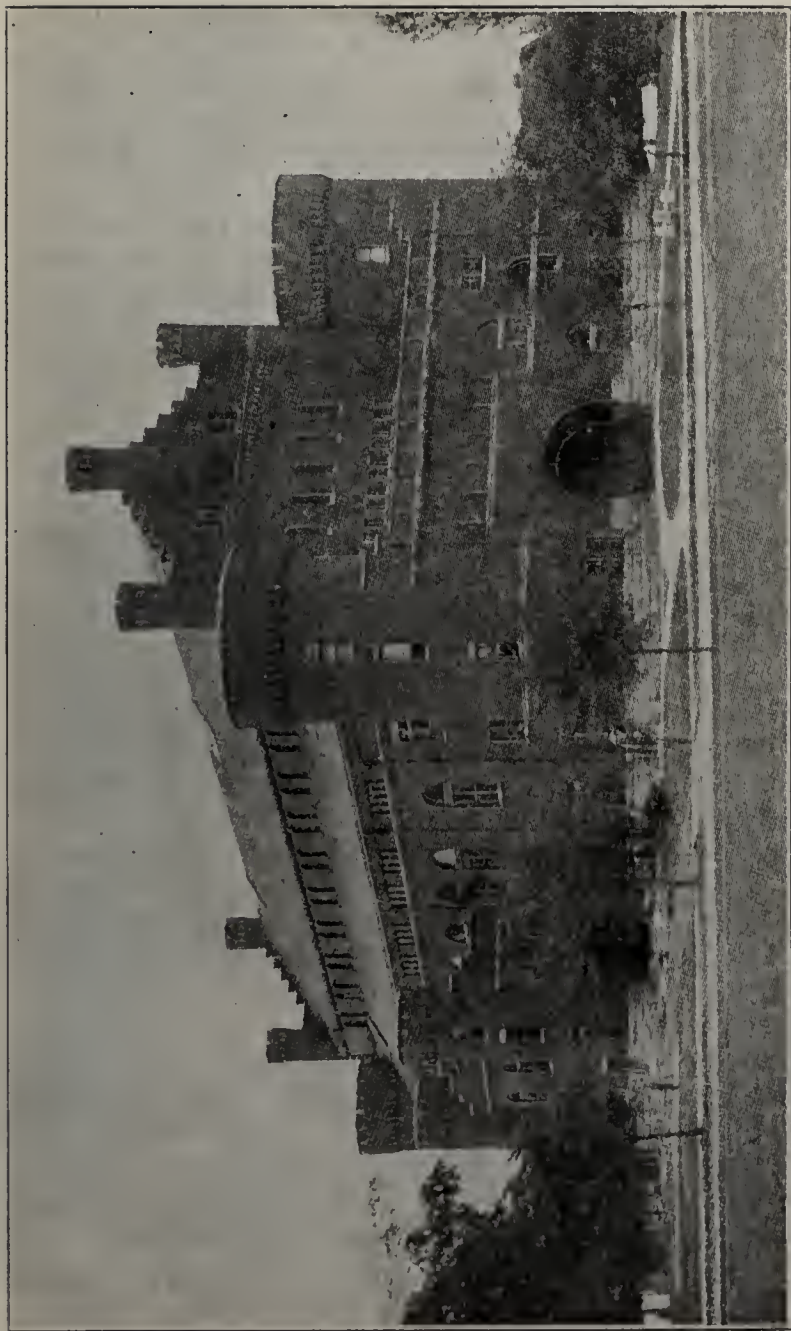
A. H. KAYSER, Sergt.-at-Arms

GEO. E. BRYANT, Chairman, R. S. C. C.

Ticket Used at Convention of 1904

for the satisfaction alone of being allied with a winning cause, still others with a thrifty eye to future possibilities. LaFollette being thus in a position of bestowing place and power, many felt the wisdom of early getting his ear. Some had come as delegates. A conference while in the city might save another, perhaps more than one, trip back to the capital.

Of this last named class was one delegate of foreign extraction (not Norwegian nor German), who had his mind set on an interview with the governor. When it became doubtful about his securing this coveted interview he began "talking out in meeting," finally reverting to his readier mother tongue the better to do justice to his feelings. He had fought LaFollette's battles for ten years, had sacrificed time and money, borne the taunts of derisive neighbors, helped send LaFollette men up to the legislature, etc., and the time had now come when some recognition was due him. In short, he wanted a job. He must see the governor. Nor would he be quieted. Finally one of the governor's lieutenants succeeded in segregating him and reasoned with him in this manner: "Why do you want a job at Madison, anyway? Have you thought out what it means? If you don't accept office you will continue to be the big man at home; you will have influence, power and respect in your town. You will be looked up to as a man fighting for the high motives of principle. If you accept an appointment you will be set down as a self-seeker and your influence and respect be lost. Besides there is no money profit in it. You will lose your business at home as well as your standing, and on top of it all you will have no influence and get no recognition here." This homily made the visitor a bit more thoughtful. He admitted the advice sounded well, yet he was not certain but that he still desired a political job. Finally two administration men escorted him to his train, giving him a treat



ARMORY AND GYMNASIUM, UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN, MADISON
Scene of Conventions of 1902 and 1904

on the way, and he parted with them in apparent good humor. However, in a later campaign he was to be found fighting the cause he had so nobly supported for a decade.

It was one of the penalties LaFollette had to suffer, the loss of many a follower who demanded more material reward than the satisfaction derived from patriotic service alone. This lesson that the great mass of men must expect small recognition for public service is one that many must learn in bitterness of heart. The one sure reward must be that of satisfaction of conscience. It is the sufficient reward of the patriot and should be of all who are not proof against disappointment. A Massena and a Ney may perform heart-breaking prodigies and sacrifices, and suffer the pangs of humiliation, re-primination and misunderstanding through a life-time, only to see the chief glory of all their toil and suffering go to a favored greater one, but civilization would have made little progress had not the martyrs of history sacrificed themselves in spite of this eternal recurrence of fact.

As Burns observes, "a few seem favorites of fate;" the very stars contending for them. Thus, in this connection and at this particular time, a learned astrologer had worked out a formula covering nearly a full newspaper page to show that it was writ in the stars that LaFollette was to triumph in the present crisis and had a great career of success before him.

As it would be an interesting study to pass in review the scores of public men of Wisconsin who have been made largely by the circumstance of hitching their chariots to the LaFollette star, so also would the defections from the LaFollette standard prove a most interesting study. In his long career of leadership it has been LaFollette's regrettable fortune to lose many a once ardent supporter of prominence. The causes of these defections have been as varied as the apostates



Cartoon of 1904 Convention Scene

in question themselves. Steadfastness in both prosperity and adversity in the faith through which they acquired place has been found irksome to many. Others never truly of the faith, who enlisted to attain selfish ends, have inevitably gravitated back to more congenial relations. Many also, once in power or place, believing themselves strong enough to stand alone, have foresworn further allegiance to their old leader or made war upon him. Others with the restless disposition of the man who insisted on shearing a wolf have soon found occasion for quarrel or estrangement. Still others could not await the slow coming of rewards. The shoals of recent Wisconsin politics are strewn with the wrecks of such deserters. Murat's loss of his kingdom of Naples by playing fast and loose with his old benefactor before Elba and Waterloo has, in a way, thus had many parallels in Wisconsin annals. The sentiment of many who have thus weakened in the faith was no doubt well expressed by one such when he said:

I tell you I am tired of this business of being a patriot. There is nothing in it. I give you warning here and now that hereafter I am going to work for yours truly.

These various defections have led to many erroneous impressions in the larger public mind not particularly interested nor concerned in the springs and causes inspiring them. As with other leaders who have undergone similar experiences, LaFollette has been repeatedly subjected to the charge of ingratitude, of jealousy, of a heartless disposition to sacrifice and destroy even his friends for his own advancement. Without presuming to enter upon any discussion of these points, it may be observed that even LaFollette's severest critics admit that he has been unwaveringly true to his ideals and causes, undeterred by defeats, temptations or unpromising prospects. He has stood by his principles and his

guns. Whatever may be said of others, he has not changed; the alternative conclusion then must be that those supporters who have since made cause against him must have themselves changed.

As a conspicuous example among such may be mentioned former Governor W. D. Hoard. In view of the severe strictures—to use no harsher term—applied by Mr. Hoard to his one-time friend and colleague, the friends of the earlier governor can scarcely complain or consider it a breach of confidence if LaFollette himself be quoted in this connection. Interviewed some years ago on the subject of his altered relations with Hoard he said:

When I was governor I always made a great deal of Hoard and kept him prominently before the people. I did this partly because I admired the man and partly out of sympathy, because I felt his political career had been turned into a tragedy through the treachery of Henry Payne and others. I often consulted him and always deferred to him in appointments in his district. We always kept a room for Hoard at the executive residence and he was always our guest while in the city. One night after I had taken him up to his room and brought up the customary refreshment which he took on retiring he said: "Robert, I'd like to talk with you a minute." We sat down and he continued:

"I don't want Cully Adams disturbed down there in congress. I understand John Nelson is trying to get his place and I want you to call him off."

"Well," I said, "I don't think I can, governor. In the first place it is against my inclinations to try to boss in these things and I don't think I could, anyway. John has a perfect right to be ambitious. Besides he is a good friend of mine; he is a man of high character, high courage, high attainments. He has been unwavering in his loyalty to our cause, while Adams is training with Babcock down there at Washington. The only thing I can do is to keep hands off and let things take their own course."

Hoard didn't like it, but was pleasant the next morning at breakfast. We had some readings and he told stories to the family for an hour. But from that day there was a gradual cooling on his part. I entertained no resentment, however, for when Secretary Knox sent for me in 1909 and told me President Taft wanted to give the place of secretary of agriculture to Wisconsin

and asked me to name a man I at once recommended Hoard. I told him of his high qualifications, his distinguished public service, his sterling character, his nation-wide recognition as an authority in matters of agriculture, his reputation as a writer and the confidence the people would repose in his selection. Very well, Hoard was invited to join the cabinet, and I also wrote him urging him to accept. But Hoard declined on the ground of age and failing health. I again wrote him that the president said there was no hurry about taking the place; that if after some months his health improved he might take the place and try it for a year. I told him how his political prospects had been wrecked by treachery and that a cabinet term would be a nice crowning of his career. But he again declined. Then Hoard and I joined in recommending Dr. H. L. Russell, dean of the college of agriculture in the University of Wisconsin, to Mr. Knox, but Dr. Russell wouldn't entertain the proposition at all. However Hoard may feel toward me, I feel kindly toward him, and think I have been more than fair and generous toward him.



HENRY A. HUBER
Early Progressive

CHAPTER XXVII

Before the National Convention.

RIVAL FACTIONS APPEAL TO NATIONAL COMMITTEE—LAFOLLETTE DELEGATION VISITS ROOSEVELT—RECEIVE NO ENCOURAGEMENT—COMMITTEE DECIDES FOR STALWARTS—PREMATURE ANNOUNCEMENT BY COMMITTEE ON CREDENTIALS—LAFOLLETTE DELEGATION LEAVES CHICAGO—STALWARTS SEATED—INCIDENTS OF SUMMER—REMOVAL OF STATE TREASURER KEMPF—DEMOCRATS AGAIN ADOPT REACTIONARY PLATFORM—PECK FOR GOVERNOR.

THE state conventions over, the scene of battle was shifted to Chicago, and a fresh rivalry begun for recognition by the republican national convention and the consequent prestige such recognition would bring. In order not to imperil the national party ticket the stalwart convention, at the suggestion of General Winkler, had nominated for presidential electors the same ticket the administration convention had, but for delegates at large to the national convention had elected Senators Spooner and Quarles, Congressman Babcock and Judge Baenseh. The administration delegates were Isaac Stephenson of Marinette, Governor LaFollette, W. D. Connor of Marshfield, whom the administration convention had just elected chairman of the state central committee; and Senator J. H. Stout of Menomonie. If the national convention would seat their delegates—thus in effect recognizing the opera house meeting as the regular state convention—the stalwart leaders held that the secretary of state would be morally, if indeed not legally, bound to place the opera house ticket in the regular republican column on the official ballot for the November election. With Henry C. Payne, then postmaster general, a member of the national committee and its acting chairman, the stalwarts had every reason to hope they

would receive such recognition. The administration, on the other hand, could scarcely hope for much consideration, but determined to press its claims.

One of the first moves was to dispatch a delegation to Washington to lay the entire political situation in the state before President Roosevelt in the hope that the distinguished promulgator of "the square deal" would exert his great influence at the convention in favor of the administration delegates. Senator Spooner had already called and urged his recognition of the stalwart claims. Largely at Connor's expense, it is said, Chairman Connor, H. P. Myrick, editor of the *Milwaukee Free Press*; Speaker I. L. Lenroot, Walter L. Houser of Mondovi and C. C. Gittings of Racine accordingly went to Washington and had an audience with the president. But the latter refused to do anything for his visitors. After listening rather impatiently to their presentation of the situation, he declared that he could take no hand in any purely factional controversy; that, in effect, it would be undignified in him to do so and might imperil party success in the state. "Go and see Brooker of Connecticut and tell him," he said finally. Brooker was a member of the national committee, of reactionary sympathies, so the delegates saw little hope in that direction. Then a final appeal was made to him to discourage the activity of the federal office-holders who were busily canvassing the state, giving open aid and comfort to the stalwart faction and lending it their powerful prestige as government representatives. It was pointed out to him that for years this condition of affairs had existed and that it had been condemned in the two last republican state platforms, as he had seen. But even on this point no satisfaction could be obtained. "I don't see what we can do," said Connor bitterly on returning to the street, "unless it be to go on a spree, as they say, and try to forget it."

It was generally understood that the national administration was hostile to the Wisconsin movement. Throughout his long ten years' struggle for better things in his state LaFollette received scarcely a word of encouragement or suggestion from Washington; on the other hand, Spooner, Quarles, Payne and Babcock had the close ear of the administration and directed all appointments toward the building up of a powerful state machine of active anti-LaFollette partisans. In view of the great national prestige of this quartet politicians generally looked for a decisive turning down of LaFollette by the national convention and Walter Wellman writing authoritatively from Washington further added that "the president regards the decision to be made by the Chicago convention much like the verdict of a jury, which no outsider must tamper with."

A little further notice of the relations between Roosevelt and LaFollette at this time may be of interest.

In his speech at Oshkosh, and again at Milwaukee, in 1912, while making his campaign as the progressive presidential candidate, Colonel Roosevelt said:

It has been asserted that I did not take sides with the LaFollette people in their campaign in 1904. This is an error. On October 16 of that year I made my position clear in a letter to Mr. Cortelyou, chairman of the national committee, which ran in part as follows:

I think Babcock and his people should be told that especially in view of the decision of the supreme court there must not be any kind of favoritism shown by us toward the "stalwarts." Under the decision of the supreme court any weakening of the LaFollette ticket is a weakening of the national ticket, etc.

Also: Again and again I have borne testimony in speech and in writings in the *Outlook* to what Senator LaFollette has accomplished in the way of progressive leadership.

These statements are interesting, especially as they show by his own words that Roosevelt did not come to the aid of LaFollette in 1904 until LaFollette had won his own fight and when it seemed political expediency to

do so. In fact everyone familiar with the political situation at the time—no matter what his faictional bias—felt that Roosevelt was hostile to LaFollette. That was regarded as elementary.

The Cortelyou letter—which LaFollette supporters asserted in 1912 had not been heard of until that year—was written October 16, 1904, about three weeks before the close of the campaign. On October 5 of that year the supreme court of Wisconsin had handed down its decision refusing to interfere with the placing of the LaFollette ticket in the regular republican column on the official ballot. Postmaster General Payne too, by the way, had died the day before in Washington. During the whole of that heart-breaking faictional campaign Roosevelt spoke no word nor made any move to aid LaFollette until LaFollette had won his fight before the supreme court. The stalwarts were then demoralized; even their candidate for governor had resigned from the ticket. Apparently as if fearful of the danger to his own ticket in Wisconsin, the president then wrote the Cortelyou letter.

Roosevelt's previous attitude toward the Wisconsin movement had been one of indifference or hostility. On April 3, 1903, while LaFollette was serving his second term as governor, President Roosevelt visited Madison. The legislature was then in session, and had been for three months. The legislative session of that year was unparalleled in state history for desperate struggles and fierce rivalries. At the time of Roosevelt's visit the three big LaFollette measures, for primary election, ad valorem taxation of railroads and a railroad rate commission, were all hanging in the balance. Fierce battles had raged over them for weeks and the first two measures had already been repeatedly defeated by the stalwart opposition.

The stalwart corporation lobby of that period marked

the culmination of that form of activity in the history of the state. In numbers, boldness and effrontery it had never been equalled. It outnumbered the legislature itself. Among the most active lobbyists in the early LaFollette administrations were federal office-seekers, such as James G. Monahan and Henry Fink, revenue collectors, and William G. Wheeler, United States district attorney. For weeks and months they were active in the legislature in fighting the administration measures, even going to the extent at times of dragging members upon the floor and making them vote against the LaFollette bills. So offensive did they become that several times they had to be driven from the floor by resolutions or by direction of the speaker. Not only were these men, in neglect of their duties and in violation of the spirit, if not the direct letter of the law, active, but in this session Congressman Babcock was sent on from Washington by Senator Spooner—as admitted and explained at length in E. L. Philipp's stalwart history of the period—to direct the fight in the legislature against the LaFollette measures.

President Roosevelt was cognizant of this entire situation when he visited Madison. Yet he did not raise his voice in encouragement or support of the LaFollette ideas which he later professed to have endorsed. Although introduced in complimentary terms by Governor LaFollette he dropped no suggestion of encouragement in the fight LaFollette was making for better conditions. In a sedate official this had not been surprising, but in one like Roosevelt given to outspoken opinions on all subjects his silence at the time could scarcely be attributed to any ethical squeamishness.

His silence at the time recalled by contrast the action of Colonel Bryan later in coming voluntarily before the Wisconsin legislature at a critical time and making a

powerful plea in support of LaFollette, thus aiding in putting the rate commission law on the statute books.

Mention has been made of some of the Wisconsin federal office-holders of the period. It was not alone in the naming of these men, for public favor, or of bigger ones like Henry C. Payne, Postmaster E. W. Keyes and Judge Quarles, all bitterly hostile to LaFollette, that the Roosevelt bias against LaFollette was shown, but in appointments generally throughout the state. Among the most active and aggressive fighters of LaFollette and his ideas in Madison in 1904 were three young men, H. H. Morgan, A. A. Meggett and Raymond R. Frazier. For their political activities against LaFollette all of these men later received fat federal appointments, Morgan being made assistant United States district attorney, Meggett getting a place in the revenue collector's office and Frazier being appointed consul to Copenhagen, Denmark. What was true of Madison was true of other cities in the state. "Standing with the LaFollette people in 1904" appears to have been limited to the time between October 16 and November 8 of that year. Then they were again abandoned, as shown by subsequent appointments, for the faction that cast but 12,000 votes in the election.

When Roosevelt was in Africa and republican insurgency began developing in congress, following the passage of the Payne tariff bill, it was the open and confident assertion of the stalwart press that when Roosevelt returned he would "quickly squeeze this insurgency." Even the progressive papers generally regarded Roosevelt as hostile to it. "Roosevelt has always been a stickler for party," they said. It was a gambler's chance that he would take up with the new movement.

Roosevelt's first public endorsement of LaFollette came in September, 1910. The colonel happened to be in Milwaukee the day after the phenomenal LaFollette landslide in the primary election of that year, in which

LaFollette carried every county and practically every legislative district in the state. In an interview by the press he then declared guardedly that, in view of the endorsement LaFollette had received, it was the duty of the legislature to reelect him. LaFollette's fight had again been won.

Afterward in an introduction to Dr. Charles McCarthy's book on "The Wisconsin Idea," and later in an *Outlook* article he incidentally mentioned LaFollette. The Wisconsin idea was then proving popular and the colonel's candidacy was imminent.

However, in view of their triumph in the election of 1904 the LaFollette people cherished no grudge against President Roosevelt. LaFollette later regretted that the president's influence had been sought before the national convention. As a matter of fact, it can be safely asserted that secretly LaFollette did not desire the administration's aid in his state fight. As he grew in strength he perhaps inwardly rejoiced at the opposition. He preferred to win his fight alone since by so doing he would reap the whole glory. It is the way of strong and resolute characters.

With other and similar cases that of the Wisconsin contest was first presented to the national committee for adjustment. May 30 the stalwart delegates at large, through their attorneys, sent a protest to the national committee against the seating of the gymnasium delegates, accompanying it with a statement on the Wisconsin situation. A like notice was sent Chairman Payne by the administration delegates.

The action of the national committee and the national convention in subsequently refusing any recognition to the administration delegates in the face of the fact that the Wisconsin state central committee by unanimous vote (which included six stalwarts) had seated a clear majority of administration delegates in the state conven-

tion illustrated well the indifference toward the public by political bosses when "drunk with power." Their lack of political acumen in this instance was strikingly shown in the subsequent repudiation by the voters of Wisconsin of the national convention's endorsement of the stalwart cause.

On the eve of the meeting of the national committee the largest delegation of half-breed leaders ever gathered together outside of a state convention accompanied Governor LaFollette and the other national delegates to Chicago. It was a war party, elate, defiant, flushed with victory and impatient under the lead of the aggressive governor. Practically every prominent half-breed leader in the state was in the party whose magnitude and spirit were expected to impress the national body, but whose latter sensibilities were to prove tantalizingly stoical. It is said enough undelivered speeches and arguments to form a volume were afterward brought back on the "swearing train" by ambitious members of this delegation who had hoped to find opportunity to appear before the committee.

The national committee met at Chicago June 15, and after hearing spirited arguments by Mr. Olin and Mr. Jeffris for the stalwarts and by H. W. Chynoweth of Madison and G. E. Roe of New York for the half-breeds it voted unanimously to recommend the seating of the stalwart delegates. The decision greatly rejoiced the stalwart leaders. Said J. G. Monahan, "I never doubted the result. I knew the committee was composed of honest men and true republicans." Defiance breathed from all the administration interviews. "They are strong in the corridors," said Henry F. Cochems, "but we are strong in the woods." Said Walter Houser, speaking for the governor: "It is an outrageous steal. But we never give up a fight. We will take our case to the committee on credentials and from there to the convention.

From there we will carry it back to Wisconsin. Governor LaFollette's fight will be carried on in the state just as if nothing had happened in Chicago."

In view of the results that followed, the comment of Amos P. Wilder, editor of the *State Journal*, at the time is interesting. Mr. Wilder said:

LaFollette is a fighter and is not cast down. If he had the confidence of the people of the state he would now be in a notable position to transfer the war against the state republican organization to the national republican organization. This is a startling thing to say, but the fact is, among the common people of the land there is a good deal of quiet resistance to the corporation tendencies in the republican party. LaFollette could attempt to bring national republicanism into line against the railroads, Tom Platt and the corporations, as he has influenced a great part of the republican party in Wisconsin. He has the personality, oratory, and the organizing power to move into the national arena; but, alas, he has cut his bridges. * * *

LaFollette will fight for some turn, in the courts or elsewhere, but he has met his Waterloo in the national committee. Like Napoleon coming back from Elba, the governor may create a ripple by his valor; but the great mass of his followers will elect to be republicans, rather than LaFollette men. The ambitious self-seekers in his ranks will not lose their future by being known to the national leaders as bolters, and the rank and file of his following prefer to be "straight" according to the party definition. The able leaders of the party, the newspapers that Governor LaFollette might now have had had he been true to himself and sought his ends by straightforward means, instead of by indirects, are now on the other side. If he had them today he could issue a manifesto of defiance to the national leaders in Chicago that would shake the country.

From the national committee the rival factionalists moved upon the committee on credentials for the national convention. The defiant refusal of the LaFollette leaders to accept the verdict of the national committee and yield the fight centered much curious interest in the governor, particularly the report that he might seek to appear before the convention in person and present his side of the case. After this committee had likewise

heard the arguments a subcommittee of three was appointed to sift the evidence and report to the full committee on credentials.

However, before the sub-committee had acted confirmation of a partly definite nature was obtained of the report that the gymnasium delegates were already scheduled for slaughter.

It happened in this way: A former Madison newspaperman, Rob R. Hiestand, then employed in Chicago, called at noon at the headquarters of the committee on credentials. He was met at the door by Senator R. C. Kerens of St. Louis, who in reply to the reporter's inquiry said carelessly:

"Oh, we're going to throw them out."

The scribe immediately wired the reply to the *Wisconsin State Journal*, then the "official" organ of the stalwarts. In screaming headlines this paper promptly "played up" the forecast as an accomplished fact. The story appeared in an early edition of the paper which went to press at 2 o'clock. When later on it developed that the sub-committee did not make its report until 5 o'clock that afternoon an embarrassing situation was created. The LaFollette partisans sought to make capital of the premature announcement by charging collusion and that it was shown to have been "a cut and dried affair from the start." Afterward every copy of this first edition which the stalwarts could find was eagerly gathered up and consigned to the flames that later it might not appear in evidence.

However, the hint dropped to Hiestand at noon that day had done its work. It was promptly conveyed to LaFollette, who with characteristic forehandedness determined on his plan at once.

When the news reached the governor he was sitting on his bed in a small room in the Victoria hotel surrounded by other members of the delegation and his legal ad-

TELEPHONES.
STANDARD—Baritone 0800, 0810
Tribune 0800, 0810
Bell... 0800, 0810

WISCONSIN

VOL. 103. NO. 67

MADISON

EXTRA!

NATIONAL COMMITTEE DECIDES FOR STALWARTS

La Follette Ticket Declared to Be Irregular
at Chicago Meeting.

AND DECISION IS DECLARED BINDING

John M. Olin Presents Case for Stalwarts and H. W.
Chynoweth and G. E. Roe Appear for La Follette
Faction--Fight Long and Bitter.

(Special to State Journal)

Chicago, June 17.—The Stalwart delegates were today seated as delegates at large to the republican national convention from Wisconsin. The national committee took this action after a two-hours' session held almost dark.

The fight was long and bitter, both sides being present in full force with printed briefs and arguments.

The committee also held that the Stalwart state ticket as nominated at Madison is regular, and that the La Follette ticket is irregular. Further, the national body holds that its decision in respect of this kind is binding and that the committee is practically a court of last resort in such matters.

Moved by these decisions the Wisconsin campaign report is expected to declare that the decision rendered today is binding upon it. This will have the effect of declaring the candidacy of

Gov. La Follette to be irregular, and his defeat and candidacy will have to "go by the board." The candidacy of Cook for governor will become regular and the other Stalwart state candidates, including those who are presidential electors, will be the ones bearing the official stamp of the republicans regularly.

The opening of the case was made by J. M. Olin of Madison who represented the stalwarts. The La Follette faction was represented by H. W. Chynoweth of Madison and Gilbert E. Roe, former law partner of the governor.

Three hours were allotted by the committee to be equally divided between the two sides.

BY ASSOCIATED PRESS

Chicago, June 17.—The republican national committee today began consideration of the Wisconsin campaign. The meeting was called to order by Chairman Faye, who however, was drawn on account of his personal life

interest in the matter the chair being taken by Senator Scott. H. W. Chynoweth of Madison, Wis. and G. E. Roe of New York formerly associated with Gov. La Follette presented to the committee the La Follette side of the case.

John M. Olin of Madison made the first speech for the anti La Follette side. He spoke at length the committee waiting the time limit. Attorney Olin covered the details of the contest made before the state central committee at the Wisconsin state convention. He told the national committee there were no grounds nullifying the state central committee to throw out the regularly elected Stalwart delegates. The speaker referred to the manner in which the state convention was conducted. He charged that a number of principles had been aimed by the opposition and complained of the treatment the delegates received. Olin spoke for an hour and a half.

visers. The governor's brows darkened. For a time he sat gloomily in silence wrestling with his feelings. No one dared to speak. Even Chynoweth, he of firm jaw and unruffled spirit, had no word to offer.

At last LaFollette arose and nervously paced the floor. Then stepping to the door he pressed a button. What dreadful thing was going to happen now? What new sensation was to be sprung? What daring coup to be executed to startle the state and the nation? Was the foiled tiger in the man to get the upper hand of his usual clear judgment and lead him into some rash act that might forever undo him?

"Waiter!" he said sternly when that aproned individual appeared in the doorway, "bring me a couple of cheese sandwiches and a bottle of milk!"

His followers collapsed with relief at this melodramatic descent. LaFollette ate his sandwiches savagely, ferociously, as if venting a grudge against them.

Then he said: "There is no use, gentlemen, in our staying here and permitting ourselves to be further humiliated. We cannot get justice here; the cards are stacked against us. Let us turn our backs on the convention and appeal to the people of Wisconsin; they know who is in the right and we can trust them to vindicate us."

However, Senator Stont, one of the delegates at large, hesitated about going to this length and was inclined to hold out. News of this fact reached the governor's friends at Madison and Col. Hugh Lewis promptly sent the following telegram to Stont:

"Ignore packed committee; the people of Wisconsin know you are right and will sustain you." On this assurance from Colonel Lewis, Senator Stont finally agreed to the LaFollette plan.

Accordingly at 4 o'clock that afternoon Mr. Roe appeared before the committee and throwing a statement

upon the table in front of it made the startling assertion that he considered the case prejudged. "Several members of the committee on credentials before which we are now asked to present our case are members of the national committee, which passed on this case before," said Mr. Roe. "We do not, therefore, consider this an unprejudiced committee. We understand, moreover, that several members of this committee have been approached, and we, therefore, decline to present our case, preferring to submit it to the people of Wisconsin at the election next November."

The members of the committee were astounded at this audacity. Said Senator McComas: "I have grave doubts as to whether we should permit that paper to be filed at all." The governor and other LaFollette delegates at large immediately returned to Madison.

The next day the committee on credentials reported against seating the LaFollette delegation and the convention adopted the report with cheers of exultation.

LaFollette's prompt hurling of this bombshell of defiance proved a masterly political move. It not only spared him the humiliation over which his opponents were gloating in anticipation, but further startled the conscience of the people to his immense advantage.

"What have you to say about the action of the convention today in seating the stalwart delegation?" a timid reporter asked the governor at the executive office on his return.

"Tell them I don't care a particle what they do at Chicago; we shall appeal to the people of the state for justice."

"Do you want to make that statement publicly?" asked the reporter, half-fearing to put such a seemingly rash statement on paper.

"Yes, sir; I do." said the governor.

But political matters were not the only ones making claim upon the governor's time. During the first week in June he was called upon to don the scholastic cap and gown and participate in the jubilee exercises of the University of Wisconsin with distinguished representatives of great universities at home and abroad.

In the closing days of the month also he delivered the address dedicating the Wisconsin building at the world's fair at St. Louis.

In spite of the desperate situation at home LaFollette determined also to fill his contracts previously made for a Chautauqua lecture tour of the west in the month of August. In order to press his propaganda of reform it has been necessary for LaFollette, whose principal asset has been his own genius and magnetic personality, to take the platform and come in contact with the people. Likewise the platform has been a convenient recourse for needed revenue. Up to the time he was elected United States senator it had been LaFollette's practice "to put back into the game" all the salary he had drawn in the public service. This in part answers the question as to where he has obtained the money to finance his campaigns. The savings of his early years in his law practice having been lost in unprofitable Dakota investments, to make a living for his family he resorted to the Chautauqua platform where he has long been in great demand. During the dull summer months when there would be little business at the capitol requiring his attention he took the opportunity to give a series of such lectures about the country.

"Don't do it, Bob," said Col. Hugh Lewis on meeting the governor one day during this campaign and being informed of the latter's proposed trip; "something might happen while you are away." "But I must," said the governor; "I've got to have some money to go into this campaign; there's going to be something doing." "I've

got some money put away," urged Lewis; "not any great amount, but draw it if you need it. If you can pay it back sometime, all right; if not, no matter."

But the governor did not accept the generous offer and went on with his lectures. While the governor was absent on this tour Senator Spooner came on from the east and spent four days in Madison going over the briefs of the stalwart attorneys, then returning to his New Hampshire summer home.

Naturally the governor's enemies sought to make capital of his absence on these trips, charging that he was neglecting the affairs of the state in thus going away.

While on these lecture tours the governor usually left the office in charge of his private secretary, Col. John J. Hannan, and his executive clerk, Henry A. Huber. Huber bore a striking resemblance to the governor, having a similar physique and like features, crowned with a replica of LaFollette's famous pompadour. He may be said to have been his alter ego in a physical sense. He is the only man in the state who can claim the distinction of having been frequently mistaken for LaFollette. Not infrequently after paying their respects or transacting their business rural visitors would leave the office with the pleasing delusion that they had been dealing with the famous executive himself, when they had simply chatted with Huber.

With becoming modesty and kindness Huber chose not to disillusionize such trustful simplicity and thereby emphasize his resemblance. In fact, it was said and seriously believed by some that Huber was chosen for the position by the governor because of the advantage this similarity in appearance would give. It would in effect be doubling the governor to an extent and thus be a saving of the executive's time whenever callers chose to make a mistake and there was nothing vital about their missions.

It chanced that once a Milwaukee caller found the entire office force, from governor down to stenographer, out of the city on political business. William Miller, the colored messenger, was the only person about. Even Jennie Nelson and Nellie Dunn, his capable clerks, were missing. The resourceful Milwaukeean was not to be dismayed, however, and called upon Miller to do his business for him, which the latter—illustrating the American capacity for meeting emergencies—obligingly did. Thereupon the visitor in imitation of the conferring of knighthood said:

“I hereby dub and create thee Governor Miller.” Miller was thus styled “the first colored executive a northern state ever had,” and so far as he went everybody admitted that “Governor Miller” made a pretty good official.

* * *

The month of August was also to witness the so-called political execution of John J. Kempf, one of the many exciting episodes of that exciting time. Kempf was state treasurer and in some manner had committed or permitted an irregularity in his relations with state depositories. The situation finally came to the notice of the newspapers, and created a great scandal at once, and as Kempf's explanations only added to the confusion many began to fear that a thorough probing might reveal a very serious condition of affairs. Accordingly to secure the state Governor LaFollette immediately served notice upon the state treasurer that he would have to raise his bond from \$250,000 to the limit of \$600,000, an enormous increase, or the office would be declared vacant by a certain date. But Kempf was unable to raise his bond. Although he had befriended them, the stalwarts did not now reciprocate by coming to his rescue with the money so badly needed. At first they sympathized with him and added this action of LaFollette's to the long and

growing category of the executive's sins. It was unwarranted cruelty, this harrying of a fellow official, they said, and done to discipline him for dawdling when the political whip had cracked.

Kempf not being of heroic clay had not shown the enthusiasm in the cause of the administration that otherwise possibly might have spared him this humiliation. In fact, he appeared to have been flirting with the other side in the matter of appointments and business.

Stalwart conferences were held even over this floating political straw. Would it pay to take Kempf up, set a martyr's aureole on his brow and then call upon a justice-loving people to avenge a great wrong? Kempf's own vacillation finally determined the answer. As he could neither increase his bond nor explain the discrepancy in the treasury their attitude changed. Perhaps Kempf would prove an undesirable. If so he must not be taken up, for already too many such were being carried for the good of the cause. So it ended that Kempf was left out in the cold by both factions and the stalwarts took another tack at political capital by denouncing Kempf as part of the LaFollette machine and characteristic of its workings. Poor Kempf! Day by day slipped by. The scandal still smelled unexplained to heaven and though he made many frantic trips to Milwaukee he could get no one to endorse his bond. Finally he appealed to a great surety company in the east. It sent two expert accountants to Madison to go over the treasurer's books and report on the advisability of furnishing the bond. Day after day dragged by and the experts were unable to give their decision. When the morning of August 30, the day set by Governor LaFollette as the limit of time for producing the bond, arrived there was a tense feeling about the capitol. Would Kempf be able to furnish his bond by noon? would he resist removal if he couldn't? would there be a scene?

were the questions everywhere asked. Perhaps his friends might come to his aid and contest his removal by violence. There were rumors of injunctions, of armed men coming from Milwaukee, of possible "surprises." There was little doing in the treasury; the force was too unstrung for work. Early in the day Kempf had made a demand on the assistant treasurer, T. M. Purtell, for certain keys, but suspecting the treasurer's motives the assistant refused to turn them over and was promptly told he could consider himself removed, but the incident ended there. Kempf then retired to his inner office and chatted casually for some hours with two Milwaukee friends and a newspaper reporter. Still the bonding company's experts were silent. At last the town whistles announced the noon hour and immediately a cloud of curious capitol officials and employes gathered about the treasury door to await developments. Kempf came out of his inner office and walked to one of the desks and just then the crowd gave way and C. C. Bennett, assistant superintendent of public property, walked rapidly in bearing a paper in his hand. In port and demeanor the big swarthy deputy suggested to the imagination the executioner of old, but his weapon was the invisible political axe. Stepping up to Kempf he read the declaration of the latter's practical removal, as follows:

Executive Office, State of Wisconsin, Aug. 30, 1904.

John J. Kempf, Madison, Wis.

Sir: You are hereby notified that your failure to furnish the additional bond of \$350,000 as state treasurer, on or before 12 o'clock noon, this thirtieth day of August, pursuant to the demand heretofore made upon you in writing by me as governor of the state of Wisconsin creates a vacancy in the office of state treasurer of Wisconsin by operation of law. Therefore, I, Robert M. LaFollette, governor of the state of Wisconsin, do hereby formally declare the office of state treasurer of Wisconsin vacant.

R. M. LAFOLLETTE, Governor.

Kempf listened attentively to the reading and at its conclusion undramatically said "all right" and returned to his inner office for his hat. The agony was over.

This, however, was not the end nor the whole of the Kempf comedy, or tragedy. It was to continue a diversion to the very end of this campaign so rich in unusual features and incidents. In other words Kempf was to stage a little court side show of his own, independent of the big stalwart exhibit.

Kempf had been renominated at the gymnasium convention with the other state officers, but a day or two after the exposure of the practices in the treasury he announced his resignation from the ticket, having been smitten with fear after a visit from Chairman Connor and Theodore Kronshage.

Scarcely had these persuasive worthies left him, however, when Kempf changed his mind and announced that he proposed remaining on the ticket; that he had signed his resignation under the influence of threats made by Chairman Connor. On August 20 he discharged two clerks, W. F. Duke and W. A. Richter, who were more or less actively hostile to the administration. This act was generally regarded as a bid on his part for greater consideration in the treasury matter or for his retention on the state ticket. However, this hope for favor seemed to prove a delusion and when three days later Governor LaFollette ordered him to raise his bond Kempf secured a temporary injunction from Judge Halsey of Milwaukee restraining Chairman Connor and Secretary of State Houser from taking him off the ticket, although his resignation had been accepted. He set forth that he had signed his resignation only when threatened by Connor with prosecution for embezzlement if he would not do so.

Also the day after Kempf's removal Chief Justice Cassoday of the supreme court, signed an order upon the governor and other state officers to show cause why

Kempf should not be allowed to bring suit for the retention of the treasuryship.

Finally on October 28, a few days before election, Kempf secured from another Milwaukee court, Judge Ludwig, a decision holding that his alleged resignation was void. Kempf was allowed to remain on the ticket. As the campaign progressed in intensity his affair was so overshadowed as to be practically forgotten. There was no disposition to further harry him and he was triumphantly re-elected.

In fact through the aid of sympathetic stalwart votes he made such a good showing in the election that it became a passing newspaper pleasantry to suggest "Kempf, the vote-getter," for the next United States senator.

* * *

The democratic platform of that year was but slightly less reactionary than that of 1902. The same interests that had dominated the preceding convention of the party reappeared at the convention of 1904 which opened at Oshkosh August 31 of that year, the last convention of its kind in Wisconsin. The array of railroad attorneys was particularly significant. Former Senator William F. Vilas of Madison, National Committeeman T. E. Ryan of Waukesha, Dave Rose of Milwaukee, Neal Brown of Wausau, J. M. Clancey of Stoughton and T. M. Kearney of Racine led the forces of reaction.

A valiant minority led by such men as J. L. O'Connor of Milwaukee; who was made chairman, W. G. Bruce, A. J. Schmitz and L. G. Bomrich of Milwaukee, John A. Walsh of Washburn and T. L. Cleary of Platteville sought to put the party in line with the progressive declarations of the republican administration and by hard fighting succeeded in saving the party from going the whole length in the matter of reactionary doctrine. Before the convention opened it was predicted that the party would reverse itself in its stand of two years be-

fore, but with the arrival of Colonel Vilas on the scene and his selection as chairman of the committee on resolutions this hope was dispelled. He became the dominating figure of the convention and molded its flabby body to his entire liking. The progressive members of the committee on resolutions, Messrs. Bruce, Cleary, Burke, and Walsh, fought strongly for a platform squarely endorsing primary elections, a railway rate commission with power to fix rates, 2-cent fares, etc., and went to the extent of bringing in a minority report, but amid taunts that their supporters were LaFollette servitors these planks were voted down and milk-and-water substitutes adopted.

The minority heartily favored "the principle of primary elections," but the majority report pronounced it "undemocratic" as it had in 1902 and denounced the law then under a referendum.

The railroad interests were particularly active in the convention and one delegate declared that the committee on resolutions was given to understand that one railroad campaign contribution alone of \$15,000 could be obtained were a stand hostile to the LaFollette position taken with reference to railroads. If the old convention system was to be condemned because of its unrepresentative, corrupting and immoral boss features, it was peculiarly appropriate that it should pass out of existence in Wisconsin under such auspices and practices as marked this occasion.

The amiable George W. Peek of Milwaukee, whose previous administrations had been marked by scandalous lobbying and a low official tone in general in the legislature, was named for governor.

While the formal speech making campaign of the administration may be said to have not begun until October, it was a sort of continuous campaign on the part of the governor, who went out whenever he found op-

portunity to do so. On August 18 he delivered a stirring and characteristic address in Eau Claire in which he outlined his story of the recent state conventions and repeated his defiant determination not to be influenced in his course whatever the decision of the supreme court might prove to be. Charging the railroads with having given rebates of \$5,432,000 in five years, he declared that at the last session of the legislature Assemblyman Finnegan of Green Bay had brought him a handful of letters from merchants asking for the passage of the rate commission bill and another handful of forged telegrams purporting to come from the same merchants protesting against the bill.

Once under way, the campaign was pushed with extraordinary vigor by the opposing factions, who seemed for a time to have lost sight of the common democratic foe in their fierce intra-party rivalry.

The first week in October was one of stirring developments. On the first day LaFollette invaded Trempealeau county and urged the defeat of Senator Gaveney. On the second, Chairman Goldin of the stalwart state central committee, announced that he would put a hundred speakers into the field to defeat LaFollette. The third day Senator Spooner issued a sweeping denial of the charges of Lincoln Steffens. On the fourth the incidents were the death of Postmaster General Payne at Washington, the suit of former Governor Seofield against the *Milwaukee Free Press* and a speech by Senator Spooner at Milwaukee in denunciation of LaFollette. The fifth day the supreme court handed down its decision in the factional controversy, while on the following day Cook withdrew from the head of the stalwart ticket and Seofield was substituted in his place. Such were the unravelings in a week of the tangled skein of factional history.

Desperate as seemed the prospects of his own personal

fortunes, LaFollette did not hesitate to still further imperil them by asking the defeat of reactionary republican candidates for the legislature where he felt some reasonable assurance that they might be succeeded by progressives.

The saving of self was not sufficient, as with the generality of politicians; he resolved, if possible, to also carry with him a legislature of his own kind. Accordingly on October 1, he invaded Trempealeau county for a series of three speeches that day in the course of which he sharply assailed J. C. Gaveney, the stalwart state senator of the county. An interesting circumstance in connection with the day was the fact that he and Gaveney rode fifty miles that day on the same train, in fact occupying the same railroad coach.

An incident that gave the governor's friends some worry was the sending of a letter to National Chairman Cortelyou by 148 professed LaFollette men, saying that they would abide by the decision of the national convention unless the supreme court should rule otherwise. Many feared that this apparent large defection from the governor's standard would weaken him, but the governor pointed out that many, if not most of the signers were "weaklings" in the faith and would be found to have little influence. His view was to prove correct. Few of the signers have since been heard from politically.

CHAPTER XXVIII

The Supreme Court Decision.

STALWARTS APPEAR BEFORE TRIBUNAL—DEMAND REPUBLICAN COLUMN ON BALLOT—ATTORNEYS IN BIG LEGAL CONTROVERSY—COURT SUSTAINS STATE CENTRAL COMMITTEE—COOK WITHDRAWS—STALWARTS DEMORALIZED.

THE victory of the stalwarts before the national convention was an important one, but another even more necessary from a tactical point of view had to be won, which was, to capture the republican column on the official ballot and thus obtain the further prestige of regularity. Secretary of State Houser, an administration partisan, who made up the ballot, stood in the way and could be overcome, if at all, only through the courts. To forestall delays, it was determined to ask the supreme court in the first instance for a writ restraining Houser from placing the LaFollette ticket in the republican column and directing him to give such place to the stalwart ticket on the ground that the national convention was the highest party authority and that such national convention had placed the seal of regularity upon the stalwart convention.

On August 9 the court, on motion of John M. Olin, granted the attorneys for the stalwarts, right to begin suit in equity for such injunction and the secretary of state was given two days for his answer. No injunction was ever issued by the court in this case.

In line with its contention that the supreme court had no jurisdiction in a purely party or factional controversy the administration determined to proceed with regularity to obtain party recognition.

With the prospect of two tickets making claim, Secretary of State Houser appealed to the old republican

state central committee to determine which of the two conventions was regular and if it had acted properly and legally in its certification of the membership of the state convention. The stalwarts protested loudly at this, declaring that since that committee no longer existed it could neither be called together nor would its members have any jurisdiction.

Nevertheless, the old committee met at Madison August 18 and listened to a letter from Secretary of State Houser that demands had been made in behalf of two tickets to go in the republican column on the official ballot and that a decision was desired from the committee as to which was entitled to recognition.

With great solemnity and regularity the committee decided it could not go ahead in such a serious matter without a full knowledge of the facts and the giving of both sides an opportunity to be heard. So an adjournment was taken to September 12 to give the attorneys time to present their testimony and briefs.

On September 12 the old committee again met in a room in the Brown block at Madison. Present were Gen. George E. Bryant, chairman; C. O. Marsh, secretary; Theodore Kronshage, John M. Nelson, C. C. Gittings, Perry C. Wilder, J. C. McKenzie, J. A. Stone, S. E. Gernon, W. T. Sarles, H. J. Van Cleve, S. J. Bradford, T. P. Dousman, Dwight T. Parker and W. H. Smith. I. L. Lenroot appeared as attorney for the ticket headed by LaFollette while Olin & Butler, Madison, were present for the Cook ticket.

Mr. Olin immediately made the point that since the old committee had passed out of existence it had nothing to say about party procedure. Whereupon to consider this point the committee voted to go into executive session. Newspapermen and attorneys were excluded with other visitors. After an hour, in which time it is said some excellent cigars were consumed, the committee reopened

the doors and declared that after due consideration it was found the objections of Olin & Butler were not well taken and consequently were overruled; the attorneys would proceed.

Mr. Olin refused to do so and withdrew, whereupon Mr. Lenroot took up the examination of witnesses. State Chairman W. D. Connor was called. It had been "worth coming far and staying long" to have heard the interesting story counsel solemnly drew from the injured state chairman, remarked a visitor present. As if the members of the committee and counsel had never heard of the convention (over which said counsel had himself presided), Connor gravely told of this historic meeting, of the cruel attempted usurpation by the stalwarts, of the abuse and insults to which he and his associates had been subjected, of the regular, correct and dignified course the administration and the new committee had ever pursued, and finally of the arbitrary and shameless action of the national convention, and the attempt now of a brutal and bolting faction to obtain a place on the party ticket.

The committee decided that another executive session was necessary. Again after an hour it reopened the doors and announced its decision that the gymnasium convention was the regular one, that its ticket was the real republican article and that the national convention was not competent to decide in the matter. A statement to this effect was signed by all the administration members.

Of this extraordinary proceeding the *Milwaukee Sentinel* said ironically:

The old committee did its duty. It haled itself before the council composed of itself, heard its own case, acted as court, prisoner, prosecuting attorney, defendant's attorney, jury, sheriff, court crier and clerk of the court and after a full and impartial hearing pronounced itself "not guilty."

On September 5, in a crowded courtroom, the administration, represented by H. W. Chynoweth, attorney, and R. M. Bashford, I. L. Lenroot and John Barnes, of counsel, made its formal reply in the form of a counter motion for dismissal of the complaint and suit on the ground that the court lacked jurisdiction; that the jurisdiction was committed to the state central committee of 1902, under section 35, revised statutes of 1898, reading in part:

“When two or more conventions or caueuses shall be held and the nominations thereof certified, each claiming to be the regular convention or caucus of the same political party, preference in designation shall be given to the nominations of the one certified by the committee which had been officially certified to be authorized to represent the party.” The case was set for hearing September 14 and printed briefs were ordered to be filed by that date. When the case came up for hearing the court for two days listened to able arguments on the question of jurisdiction.

In the meantime the decision of the supreme court was awaited with the keenest anticipations, in spite of the professed indifference of the leaders in both factions, and their declarations not to be deterred from their respective courses by it. The morning of September 27, on which day the decision was expected to come down, the court room was crowded with politicians who listened intently for “State No. 11.” But no decision was announced. Plainly there was much disappointment. Were it not to come down for three more weeks—the regular time for the next decisions—the time would be short to turn the verdict into the most effective political capital. In the meantime there was nothing to prevent the secretary of state from placing the LaFollette ticket in the coveted column; both the present and the preceding state central committees were prepared to certify to

such ticket. However, they resolved to respectfully await the court's finding.

Finally, early in the morning of October 5 notice was quietly sent the newspapers that a decision would come down that forenoon. The papers promptly cleared their columns and pulled down their biggest type for the handling of the great story. All newsboys were called in to handle the "extras" and decrepit typewriting machines began everywhere clicking out new political guesses and speculations.

The decision was a victory for the administration. Three judges, Justices Marshall—who wrote the opinion—Winslow and Dodge, took the administration's view, Chief Justice Cassoday dissenting. Justice Siebecker took no part in the proceedings.

Naturally, the decision occasioned the greatest rejoicing in the administration camp, and the governor created great enthusiasm in a rural audience in Waukesha county by dramatically producing a telegram announcing the decision and reading it aloud.

In its decision the court said in opening:

The controversy shown to exist by the foregoing sufficiently concerns the prerogatives of the state, and affects the liberties of the people, to be within the original jurisdiction of this court.

Continuing it said:

The decision of the national republican convention as to which of the two sets of delegates from this state claiming the right to represent the republican party thereof in such convention was entitled to recognition is not of any significance as a guide to the secretary of state, or to the committee authorized to determine the factional dispute under said section 35, since the exclusive jurisdiction thereof, as regards the official ballot law, was conferred by the legislature upon the latter as a special tribunal as before indicated. * * * It is the duty of the secretary of state to act accordingly, certifying both sets of nominations to the various county clerks, but giving to those headed by Robert M. LaFollette, for governor, preference as aforesaid. * * * Duty constituted authority having spoken within its jurisdiction it must be conclusively presumed held to have spoken rightly.

A day or two afterward Chief Justice Cassoday handed down an opinion, saying in part:

As I understand, this court has not undertaken to determine which of the two conventions was composed of a majority of the rightfully elected delegates. * * * The whole question is thus made to turn upon the power of the committee and not upon the question whether the one convention or the other was composed of a majority of the rightfully elected delegates. To bar from the convention, even for the purposes of organization, the rightful representatives of voters is, as it seems to me, in effect to bar out the voters who sent them.

The decision caused great chagrin among the stalwarts. It was realized that it was a death blow to their hopes. The *State Journal* insinuated band wagon proclivities on the part of the court and suggested support of Peek, the democratic nominee, saying:

There is everything to gain and nothing to lose by abating this growing nuisance known as LaFolletteism.

Apart from politics it will be heavenly to have peace restored to this state. Bob LaFollette has led us all a hard race for a half dozen years. Poor Myrick, one of the best of fellows in normal times, must be worn out; and everyone who is even remotely related to this factional row has been reduced to nervous prostration. Bob done it. It is all for his glory. Can't we make up a fund and ship this stormy petrel to some island of the sea where he can stand on an isolated cliff and make speeches to the suckers of the sea and the gulls of the air? Wisconsin is weary—oh, so weary, of LaFollette's tempest! Let us arise and sing, "Rest, Perfect Rest!"

True to his declaration that he would abide by the decision of the supreme court, Cook promptly resigned from the stalwart state ticket as candidate for governor when the court decided that the LaFollette ticket was entitled to the recognition of regularity. This action, coupled with that of the court, had a most depressing and demoralizing effect on the stalwart organization. With the general abandoning his army at a most crucial point, the contest now practically degenerated into a rout.

To save appearances, former Governor Edward Sco-

field was substituted for Cook, and so great was Scofield's hatred of LaFollette that he readily consented to the sacrifice in the hope of thereby defeating LaFollette by dividing the party vote.

Scofield was a better fighter than Cook, and a few days before had proved this by instituting a suit for \$100,000 against the *Milwaukee Free Press* for carrying a story to the effect that while a member of the state senate, Scofield had handled Sawyer money during a United States senatorship election. However, Senator Spooner advised the withdrawal of the stalwart state ticket and on October 10, the state central committee of that faction, met and considered this suggestion under the guise of thereby saving the republican presidential ticket. The proposition was not adopted, however, and Spooner was urged to remain in the field and continue the fight on LaFollette. Accordingly he made two more speeches against LaFollette and then returned to the east to remain until near the close of the campaign.

Secretary of State Houser and Treasurer Kempf were not the only state officers involved in litigation during this memorable campaign. All of them, with the exception of the superintendent of public instruction, were more or less so involved.

Commissioner of Insurance Zeno M. Host staged a big special exhibit of his own, as was remarked at the time, by taking up the cudgels against the two mighty insurance companies—the Equitable and the Prudential, and then as a side diversion bringing action against two Milwaukee newspapers. Host had ruled that the Equitable society was obliged to distribute its surplus every five years. About \$8,000,000 in surplus was involved in Wisconsin alone, it was claimed. The Equitable resisted Host's ruling, and obtained an injunction restraining him from revoking its license, as he threatened to do if it did not make such distribution. Host, however,

was sustained in the lower court whereupon the company carried the case to the supreme court.

In the meantime, trouble had arisen with the Prudential company. An examination of the company's books had disclosed that over half of its 40,000 shares were held by the Fidelity Trust Company of Newark, N. J., making the solvency of the Prudential dependent on the solvency of the trust company. When Host therefore sought to make an examination of the trust company and was refused any information, he gave notice that he would refuse to renew the license of the Prudential company to do business in Wisconsin. At this the Prudential company secured an injunction temporarily restraining the commissioner from revoking the license. Host charged that the trust company was underwriting a large number of public service corporations and was fearful of an examination and furthermore that the two insurance companies had leagued to discredit and defeat him as shown by the fact that the same attorneys appeared against him for both companies. It was a sinister attempt on the part of the Equitable, he declared, to retain \$70,000,000 of surplus due its policy holders.

Host was a good fighter, big of body, clear of head, thick of skin, decisive and unafraid, and so far from being embarrassed by his fights with these big corporations, he also brought suit for \$150,000 damages against the *Milwaukee Sentinel* and the *Milwaukee Daily News* for making too free with his official troubles with the insurance companies.

Governor LaFollette himself did Trojan work on the stump that fall. Speaking of it afterward he said: "For forty-eight days I was on the stump, with only Sundays out, and averaged eight hours and a half on my feet, and then there were thirty counties that I didn't go into at all from choice. You see, I was campaigning for members of the legislature. I went into those counties

only where I thought bad men ought to be beaten or good men elected. I ought to have made such a campaign in 1902, but there were other complications then. In 1904, however, I determined to get a legislature of the right kind. It was nothing to me to be governor of Wisconsin without being able to accomplish anything."

Some further idea of the enormous industry of LaFollette in this campaign may be formed from the part he took in the publicity feature of it alone. In the course of the campaign that year 1,160,000 pamphlets were sent out, ten to each of 160,000 voters. And Governor LaFollette himself practically wrote all these pamphlets. One was blocked out by Charles K. Lush and another by Walter L. Houser, but both were rewritten by LaFollette. In addition to this he prepared a speech applicable to each county he visited showing the freight rates in Illinois and Iowa. In this enormous work the compilation of the figures was done by Halford E. Erickson, commissioner of statistics, while LaFollette himself worked out the comparisons. The other pamphlets included one on primary elections, a roll call of the stalwart members of the legislature of 1903, a reply to E. L. Philipp's "Red Book" on the railroads, a parallel column exposure of Amos P. Wilder, editor of the *Wisconsin State Journal*, and one entitled "The Truth About Incomes and Expenses of the Administration," and others.

On the evening of October 5, the day the supreme court handed down its decision in the factional case, Senator Spooner spoke at Milwaukee, opening his campaign for the stalwart ticket. In this address he directed a sharp attack against the primary election law, which is interesting as summing up the objections to that measure. In part he said, as reported in the *Milwaukee Sentinel*:

For myself, I do not intend to vote for this primary election law which is now pending before the people. It is radical. I suppose none more radical has ever been drafted. I would have

voted against the Stevens bill if I had been a member of the legislature. And I would have voted for the Hagemeister bill.

I do not like this proposition. I say nothing about doubts as to its constitutionality, as violating the constitutional guaranty of the secrecy of the ballot. But when applied to a large area like a state there are some objections which are printed here; most of them are good:

Because the voters cannot have personal knowledge of the comparative fitness of candidates with whom they are not acquainted, and are in danger of voting for persons who are unworthy of trust and who would not, if known, command their confidence and support.

Because the system necessarily keeps out of office everybody but office-seekers and tends to swell the number of that class.

You stop to think about that. Under this system no office can seek the man; the man must seek the office.

No man finds the door to serve the public unless he opens it himself or hires someone to do it for him. I think the office-seeking class is large enough now, don't you? (Laughter and applause.)

Because the expense of making a canvass to secure the nomination is a practical bar to a poor man. * * *

Because it gives the rich an advantage over the poor. Because it authorizes nominations by minorities, which in case of a large number of men for one office may be only a small fraction of the voters; because it subjects the people to the annoyance and burden of two campaigns instead of one; because it secures to men in office a manifest advantage over new men and prevents rotation.
* * *

This thing destroys the party machine which is to fight the enemy and substitutes in its place personal machinery for every candidate for office. Continuous correspondence, pictures of yourself, puffs of yourself, the reasons why you are the best fitted man on earth to discharge the duties of the office, and then the next step is the reason why your leading competitor is not fit; and so you get an atmosphere of scandal, of self-seeking, of rivalry, with innuendo, insinuation, slander—we are getting a taste of it now in anticipation.

The appearance of E. L. Philipp's so-called "Red Book" entitled "The Truth About Wisconsin Freight Rates," was a literary event of the campaign. The great battle in the legislative session of 1903 over the

railway commission bill had ended in defeat for the administration. Accordingly Governor LaFollette had a new issue to carry before the county fairs in the fall of that year and he pressed it with vigor. To make it effective he had tables prepared by Halford E. Erickson, applicable to each important point in the state where he spoke, showing that the people of Wisconsin, which state had no railway commission, were paying higher freight rates than the people of Iowa, for instance, with a commission to regulate rates, and that consequently the people of Wisconsin were the victims of discrimination. To counteract the effect of these speeches and that of LaFollette's famous address at the Milton Junction grange January 29, the railroads put a corps of expert statisticians and newspapermen at work to prepare other tables to prove either the falsity of LaFollette's statements or the erroneousess of his conclusions, as the case might be. For each city where LaFollette spoke, and at many points where he did not appear, such tables were prepared and were printed in some local stalwart paper, purporting to be the results of independent investigations of such paper.

Milwaukee, Oshkosh, Madison, LaCrosse, Fond du Lac, Appleton, Racine, Janesville, Rhinelander, Monroe, Whitewater, Green Bay, Ripon, Hudson, Platteville, Waupaca, Necedah, Wausau, Kilbourn, Lodi, Wauwatosa—these were among the points where local editors seemed to have suddenly discovered a passion for, and a familiarity with, intricate railway statistics that would have indicated to the unsuspecting mind a superior order of intelligence in the Wisconsin press were it not for the similarity of the articles and editorials printed. Columns upon columns of figures were presented. Occasionally some seemingly obscure or misleading statement would be taken up in other papers for further elucidation or discussion, thus giving the appearance of continued in-

terest in the subject. Smaller county sheets were directed to reprint from the larger ones and give the latter credit. Thus a sort of endless chain was set in motion. Unctuous eulogies of railroads that had been used in the granger railroad fights of thirty years before were among the not wholly unamusing features of the publication.

The "Red Book," comprising 240 pages, consisted of clippings of these articles and editorials and a comparison of the distance tariff rates of Iowa and Wisconsin. But the Wisconsin rates employed by Philipp in his comparisons were not the same rates as those quoted by LaFollette in his speeches the year before, and thereby hangs a tale.

Although the railroads had all along contended that freight rates in Wisconsin were as low as, or lower than, those in Iowa, just before New Year's, 1904, they announced that rates in Wisconsin would be reduced at the opening of the year. Particular stress was laid on the announcement that coal rates would be reduced 25 cents a ton. And certain rates were reduced. That the railroads were making a bid for public favor thereby and hoped also to disarm LaFollette and avert further state interference by their action, was charged by the administration press. The *Wisconsin State Journal* said:

Naturally the question is asked whether political agitation has effected these reductions. The fact that the railroads refrained from joining issue with the governor when he was making his denunciatory speeches may have been explained by the intention of revising the rates, now accomplished. The railroad companies have clever men as well as the political world. Nevertheless the companies are building not for a day. Governors come and go, but the railroad tracks remain.

The reduction of rates, however, did not bring about any cessation in LaFollette's crusade for further regulation. In his speech at Milton Junction in January, 1904, soon after the reductions went into effect, he said:

In opposing the bill to create the railway commission with power to reduce transportation rates on state traffic, the representatives

of the railroad companies publicly stated before the railroad committee of the last legislature that freight rates in Wisconsin were just and reasonable, and were not higher than the Iowa rates established by the commission in that state. Day after day and week after week, these railroad lobbyists assured members of the legislature that no discriminations in freight charges existed against the people of this state as compared with the neighboring states where railway commissions were in control.

All the active agencies at the command of the railroads, lobbyists and legislative agents, their press and their political supporters, raised the cry that any reduction of transportation charges would be grossly unfair to the railroads, under whose fostering care Wisconsin had made whatever industrial progress it had attained; that any change whatever would disturb the nicely-adjusted balance between the railroads and the shippers of Wisconsin, and that prosperity in the Badger state was imperiled by this uncalled for attempt to reduce rates which were already as low in this state as they could possibly be.

The awful example of granger legislation was revived, and the ghost of disaster to railroads and business interests, resulting from the granger legislation, again stalked over the state. Superannuated politicians, in long-forgotten and enforced retirement, were brought forth to tell over and over again their harrowing tale of that trying period. And the shippers came, too, certain of them, and joined in the solemn chant that rates were low enough.

But the state did not rest its case there. The evidence which it had produced in overwhelming mass before the legislature, was laid before the people. Summons came from every section and corner of the state for the facts and figures showing the exact discriminations in favor of Iowa and Illinois, which under the appeals of the railroads and their lobby, had been rejected by the legislature. Whenever men were gathered together they called, as you have called, to be put in possession of the facts accumulated, showing the precise rate relation existing between this state, where the railroads fix transportation charges, and Iowa and Illinois, where the state, through its commission, establishes the rate. It became clearly manifest to the railroads before the county fair had closed, that their protests and denials that there were no discriminations against Wisconsin, which had prevailed with the legislature, would not prevail with the people. Something had to be done. Conferences were called, the lobbyists and the representatives of corporations, in office and out of office, were summoned, and a new course of action determined upon.

And in face of all the denials that there were any discriminations, of the solemn declarations that no disturbance of the delicately adjusted balance could by any possibility be suffered, it was decided that consistency must be sacrificed—that rates must be lowered.

What a confession this whole proceeding makes! How completely are they unmasked! They had almost sworn that Wisconsin rates were “already as low as those of Illinois, with the single exception of coal, and on an equality with those of the state of Iowa.” The “situation would admit of no change.” Railroad interests and the public interests alike “could not by any possibility stand the strain,” and yet, in the hope of averting approaching defeat, awed at last by the power of public opinion, ignoring all their former declarations, repudiating all of the testimony which they presented to the legislature, and which their press has since repeated over and over again, they have at last admitted their rates too high, and are giving up to the people, for the time being, a little out of the large amount which they are wrongfully taking from them day by day.

I am glad that they have at last been forced to concede their rates too high. While the amount reduced is but a fraction of the immense sum they are wrongfully taking from the people of Wisconsin, it completely overturns all their denials; it destroys the value of all their testimony, and gives away their entire case.

I have confidence to believe that the people will discern the hollowness and the sham that goes with any reductions conceded at this time with the hope of escaping the enactment of a statute which shall put an end for all time to extortionate charges and demoralizing discriminations. No siren song, sung in double chorus for “harmony” and “compromise,” will result otherwise than in sacrificing all of the ground gained during the protracted struggle, covering now almost ten years of time.

The “Red Book” led to the appearance of a similar but smaller pamphlet issued by the administration, as stated, to refute the assertion and conclusions of the Philipp publication.

CHAPTER XXIX

Incidents in Progress of Campaign.

LINCOLN STEFFENS VISITS MADISON—VINDICATES COURSE OF ADMINISTRATION—GOVERNOR IN STRENUOUS CAMPAIGN—TYPICAL HARD DAY IN NORTHERN WISCONSIN.

ORIGINALITY and thoroughness marked many features of the campaign, particularly on the part of the administration. The work of organization was carried out to the finest detail.

In the course of his campaigning Governor LaFollette had obtained the most complete list of voters in the state, perhaps, that any politician ever had. There was first an emergency list of live and influential adherents who could be relied upon to jump a train or open their purses at a single flash when needed,—a splendid militant force of some 1,500 or more; then a list of 10,000 unquestioned supporters, and finally a large list of 100,000 or more voters to whom reasonable appeal for aid could be made. Nearly every one was set down, with his residence, nationality, party, age, and factional bias or sympathy. However, for this campaign the governor determined upon organization based on the smallest political units, the school districts. John M. Nelson, later congressman, undertook the inauguration of this comprehensive scheme. In every school district of the state, so far as practicable, some devoted supporter of the governor was deputized to canvass the district, keep the propagandist leaven working and get out the full administration vote. It was a scheme that for thoroughness had never before been approached in the political history of the state and which in general gave profitable results.

Some idea of the extent of the activity taken by outside interests in the campaign was revealed some years

later. James A. Manahan, the well known Minnesota lawyer, and later congressman, while prosecuting a case for some shippers before the Minnesota rate commission, asked a representative of the Hill interests, without, he said, expecting any results:

"You fellows spend some money in politics, don't you?"

"Oh, a little," replied the witness.

"Well, you spent \$50,000 to defeat LaFollette for governor of Wisconsin the last time he ran, didn't you?"

"Oh, no; not that much."

"Well, you sent a hundred men into the state to beat him, didn't you?"

"No, we sent only sixty."

• • •

Soon after the Chicago convention there appeared in Madison an interesting personage in Lincoln Steffens of McClure's magazine, the man who paved the way for the flood of literature of exposure that was sweeping over the land. He had "written up" the corruption of some of the great cities and had coined the term "enemies of the republic" as most applicable to public officials who served private interests instead of the people. Echoes of the turmoil in Wisconsin had reached to New York and he came to see what the noise was all about. The news of his coming created a flutter in both camps and he was eagerly courted by both sides. As if to prejudge his conclusions, both sides were laudatory of his past work in exposing corruption and laying on the lash of censure. The stalwarts professed to be in high glee at his coming. Here was a man of trained eye, of keen, discriminating judgment, of unquestioned courage and disinterested motives. He would see things in the clear light of an unprejudiced outsider and lay bare the hypocrisy, the humbug, the insanity, the ignorance of LaFolletteism and "reform," and prick the bubble with

his satiric pen. The administration press was more discreetly silent and calmly awaited his findings. He spent hours in conference with leaders of both factions. The governor gave him an audience and the stalwarts delegated two of their most experienced newspapermen, Col. William J. Anderson and Amos P. Wilder, to present the indictment against the executive, with adjurations to be tactful. Steffens gave no hint as to his conclusions and both sides were probably equally unprepared for the unreserved vindication he gave the LaFollette cause and his equally sweeping indictment of the stalwarts. It became the literary sensation of the hour. Steffens was now subjected to unmerciful scoring by the stalwart press. Senator Spooner issued a five-column reply explaining some phases of his political life on which Steffens had reflected. That the magazinist had fallen before the hypnotic power of the governor was the most charitable explanation of the stalwart newspapers. Said the *State Journal*:

The governor's hypnotic powers are proverbial and even Steffens, who has resisted the best of them in other states, proved an easy morsel for our governor. It was a great stroke for our Bob when he put his hand on Steffens' elbow and gathered him in. Steffens yielded. As Mr. Weller said, "I didn't think you'd a done it."

* * *

The one unfailing string on which LaFollette's enemies harped in season and out, on dull days and exciting alike, was the alleged political activity of the game wardens. The sins of the game warden, according to these critics, comprehended almost the complete category of human iniquity, and it was actually proved by the stalwarts that one warden had once drawn thirty-one days' pay in the month of June. This fact was blazoned in big headlines in the press of the state and no reply was made to it until Attorney General Sturdevant in a speech happily observed: "The railroads have defrauded

the state out of two millions in taxes; the stalwarts reply that one game warden has charged a day over time."

There was double reason for the dislike of the game wardens. In the first place they were enforcing the laws with reference to the protection of game with the first approach to anything like effectiveness in the history of the state, and the consequent curtailing of time-honored license was not popular in many sections where the law had long been winked at. In the second place, it cannot be denied that they made the most of their opportunities for political proselyting and formed an army of effective propagandists. One of them, of German descent, visited Rock county pretending to be one "Ole Olson," a Norwegian horse buyer from Blue Mounds, seeking heavy draft horses. He carried a grip marked "O. O." and knowing everyone at Blue Mounds and being able to talk Norwegian he was not suspected. The northern half of Rock county was thus organized by him before the stalwarts learned of his designs, and was carried for LaFollette.

As illustrating the awe in which they were held, a Madison attorney tells this story: "I was holding forth at a democratic rally in Friendship, Adams county, one night and in the course of my remarks made a statement which caused a tall individual to rise up in the audience and sing out, 'Yon're a liar!'

"That's pretty plain speaking, thought I, but as the fellow appeared to be at least nine feet high and being but half that myself I concluded not to challenge him to settle it after the meeting as I might otherwise have done, but asked him to leave the hall if he could not deport himself like a gentleman. He refused to do so, however, and soon afterward again arose and branded me a liar. Again at my request he refused to sit down or leave the hall, so I turned to the sheriff of the county, who was sitting on the platform from which I was speaking, and

asked him to put the fellow out. The sheriff was a democrat, too, but did not stir at my request. A look of incredulity passed over his face as if in surprise at my presumption in asking such a thing, and turning to me he whispered hoarsely, 'Game warden!'

* * *

The so-called rape of the stalwart supreme court briefs in this case was one of the mild sensations of the time. These briefs had been prepared with great thoroughness and care by the stalwart attorneys and it was freely predicted by the stalwart leaders that they would have a powerful effect on the public mind when finally laid before the supreme court. A day or two before this elaborate indictment was to be presented, however, the stalwart leaders and their attorneys were struck dumb by finding their whole argument exposed in the *Milwaukee Free Press*. All the points of their briefs were published with a tantalizing fullness that smote them with rage and despair. In some manner some daring and resourceful LaFollette rapscallion had gained access to the composing room of the *State Journal* at Madison and had "pulled a proof" of the plates of the briefs before they had been printed and thus prematurely exploded the whole stalwart argument. While it made little difference in the status of things, and was of little practical value to the LaFollette cause, perhaps, it was a source of much mortification and humiliation to the stalwarts as the time was too short to alter the briefs; hence, they were submitted to the court as originally written. But their "thunder" stolen, it was "dead news" that they thus submitted to the court and no sensation followed the presentation.

* * *

In the sharp warfare that was waged it was necessary at times to resort to cipher codes and other devices to prevent leakage of communications. Private letters to

the governor would occasionally become the property of his political enemies before they reached his hands, sometimes even appearing in print. It was often next to impossible, says a Milwaukee authority, to get into telephonic communication with him from Milwaukee and occasionally when the desired connection would be made there were suspicious indications of eavesdropping. But those who had occasion to talk over the phone with the governor in those days will recall that he dropped little on which the enemy might profit; that he was an adept at talking in significant riddles. On the other hand, he would occasionally "cut loose" in reckless spirit and speak out regardless of consequences. Telephone conversations were frequently carried on in foreign tongues. "I brushed up my German in great shape in my telephone talks with Milwaukee," said one half-breed partisan afterward. Even the dying Welsh tongue did great service on one occasion when Assemblyman Evans was able through it to give a quick and vital call to a capitol messenger to round up a missing legislator.

To ensure greater secrecy and safety in dispatching of important letters resort was had to unusual devices. Frequently letters were sent by express, one little letter often being all that would be found in the heart of a big express package. It sounds incredible at this day, but occasionally the governor would receive a letter stating that another letter with the desired matter would be found in an express package sent. Likewise a hand-to-hand system of transmission was put into operation. A baggageman running between Milwaukee and Madison carried letters between the two headquarters, receiving them from a messenger at one end and giving them to another messenger at the other end. Frequently the telephone or telegraph between two points would be used telling of the sending of a letter. In such cases of course the governor himself would not be called up; that would

not do ; but some lieutenant would receive the secret word to meet a certain train.

Rather expensive letter writing such, but war is costly.

* * *

Feeling ran so high that occasionally some public speaker found discretion the better part of valor. A young newspaperman employed by the stalwarts was booked to speak one evening in a small town in Trempealeau county. As he sat on the platform waiting for the crowd to gather he noticed that a large block of seats directly in front of the platform had been reserved for some purpose and was not being filled. Just before the hour of opening a half hundred husky Norwegians came storming in and boisterously took possession of the reserved section. Like their viking forbears of old each carried an enormous circular shield which bore in great letters, "Roosevelt and LaFollette," and ringing cheers were given for these worthies before sitting down. The speaker, as he afterwards stated, realized that he was virtually a prisoner of war and cudgelled his brain for some tack on which to save appearances. A happy idea finally seized him. He saw in the audience the high school principal of the town, a man whom he had known in the university. Seizing on this straw he began with an expression of his pleasure at visiting the town and seeing again an old college friend. Then some time was spent in compliments to the principal and in dwelling on the value of higher education in general, following which diplomatic paving he discussed the political situation in a largely non-committal manner and then as gracefully as possible left the platform while the hall rang with uproarious demonstrations for LaFollette.

* * *

So excited did people become that democrats as well as republicans were "set by the ears." Old line bourgeois "who didn't know the war was over" and who

hitherto had always taken "their politics and their drinks straight" allowed themselves to be bewitched from party idolatry and cracked one anothers' heads in true Kill-kenny style over LaFollette.

But if the demoerats became wrought up what shall be said of the republicans? Houses were divided against one another; father was set against son, brother against brother, and even sister against sister. Business partnerships were disrupted. Children of opposing factions occasionally were not permitted to play together, the parents of the one side regarding the children of the other as something almost unclean. Dear friends were estranged and occasionally husband and wife came near to dangerous points of disagreement. Doubtless the case of a prominent Madison family had many counterparts.

In this instance the husband was an ardent LaFollette man while his wife chose to stand by her father's family against LaFolletteism. Accordingly the husband subscribed for the LaFollette organ and swore by it, while his wife read assiduously the rival organ of stalwartism and declared the political pabulum it provided the only bona fide manna. Even schoolgirls were caught up in the exciting whirl and many a father was put in a dilemma by quarreling daughters appealing to him to decide between the merits of their respective causes and candidates. One spirited LaFollette girl in Madison peremptorily ordered out of the house a stalwart canvasser who came seeking to influence her father and to secure her wavering sire against further argument she called him in from the garden and read him a lecture on his political duty.

It may sound incredulous and ridiculous at this day yet it is literally true that in many places practically every question with reference to men and policies was considered, if not settled, in the light of its connection with LaFolletteism. As instinctively and unfailingly as

water seeks its level there was a mental balancing on this line of thought whenever any query came up. If a man stopped at a postoffice to mail a letter he was suspected of conspiring with the stalwart postmaster. If a new family came to town, its factional politics was first looked up; if a school director or janitor were to be chosen; if a church considered the election of a new minister, the bogie of stalwartism or the bugaboo of LaFolletteism was often first smoked out. All university elections from president down to golf caddies, it is said, were determined on this score; women threw their shopping to their political kin and when it came to choosing a telephone the Madison stalwarts elected the Bell (the corporation service) while the half-breeds chose the independent line which was controlled by J. C. Harper, a LaFollette champion.

But if LaFolletteism led to tragic divisions and estrangements it also produced the comedy of queer combinations of bed-fellows. As with socialism, the LaFollette cause enlisted the interest and support of the profoundest thinkers and the most sodden unthinking. At the various conferences and love feasts university experts of international renown rubbed elbows and exchanged ideas with uneducated workmen, occasionally to mutual advantage, and in the common ecstasy at one victory a Catholic priest and a high Masonic dignitary actually embraced one another in the executive chamber. Imagine such spectacle in any other land! said an observer. These were the disinterested patriots. But in addition to them and the great mass of the plain country and town folk who had no other concern than common justice and good government, many were drawn into the camp through ulterior motives.

Here and there a "sorehead" from the ranks of privilege came over in order to get even with Spooner or someone else of his faction, or to satisfy some private

grudge, and as the cause waxed in strength, the office-seeker, the man on the lookout for the bandwagon, the professional patriot, came in with all the characteristic zeal and protestation of the sudden convert and too often made the governor inaccessible to the supporter of real worth and influence.

* * *

During this exciting period friends of the governor now and then were apprehensive upon two points, that he might break down physically or that he might be made the victim of violence. His physicians, his relatives and many of his friends importuned him not to overtax himself or take any undue risks of any other kind. Yet it availed little. And, as one of his friends said, had it not been that he possessed a constitution of Swedish steel and an unwearied, unwavering will he could not have borne up. He seemed possessed of the endurance of two or three ordinary men although he was still dieting for a weak stomach. He frequently outwore one or two automobiles. One day's experience may give an idea of the ordeal to which he subjected himself.

This typical strenuous day was one experienced in northern Wisconsin. It began with a 35-mile trip by train from Shawano to Wittenberg, at which latter place he spoke for an hour and a half in the early morning. Here he was to have been met by an automobile and taken to Mattoon, another distance of 35 miles, but the machine having broken down he resolved to make the trip by team. Much of the road was new and was laid through dense woods with an occasional long stretch of corduroy to bridge over wet places. A 35-mile drive under most comfortable circumstances is no small day's "work" for ordinary men, but it was only the beginning of the day's ordeal for the governor. After speaking an hour at Mattoon he set out for Phlox where he was to be at one o'clock but where he failed to arrive until 6. A big

crowd of farmers had waited all afternoon to see him and after a brief talk to them he set out in a surrey containing four people for a 12-mile drive to Polar which was reached in the record time of a little over one hour. After speaking nearly an hour here he set out in the same surrey, with fresh horses, for another 8-mile drive to Antigo. It was now pitch dark and having eaten scarcely nothing since morning the governor began to complain of a gnawing hunger. A basket lunch that had been prepared for him had gone astray somewhere. "I'm nearly famished, boys," he said, "I can't go on forever without something to eat."

High upon a near-by hill a small light was seen blinking dimly in the inky blackness and the governor and C. O. Marsh tumbled out and headed for it in quest of food. As they neared the house a large dog met them savagely and it was with much difficulty that they finally got into the house without being attacked by the brute. It proved the home of a German family. The farmer had attended the governor's meeting and had not yet gotten back, and his wife was unable to understand English. In response to a request for some bread and butter and sour milk she declared in her native tongue that she had nothing of the sort in the house. The governor's eye, however, caught sight of a loaf of rye bread on the table.

"Can I have that?" he asked pointing to it.

"Ja," replied the woman, not without some bewilderment at the prospective raid on her slender resources.

Seizing the loaf the governor broke it across the middle and with his hands dug out the soft parts of the inside and laid them on the table, tucking the crusts under his arm.

"Have you any eggs?" asked the governor.

"Nein," said the woman, evidently not understanding him.

"Ja, Vir haben Zwei, Mutter," said one of the little girls of the family who understood English, and held up two fingers.

They were produced forthwith, and dashing a little salt and pepper on them the governor literally threw them down his throat raw. Then giving a quarter to each of the little girls he pulled down his crush hat, tucked the rye crusts under his arm and dashed out again into the darkness to beat another retreat from the dog to his carriage.

Antigo was reached a little before 9:30. Here was gathered an audience of 1,400 people waiting patiently to hear him. Following a hasty bath and a change of underwear the governor then spoke for nearly three hours and was given an immense ovation.

There was no time for food or rest following the speech, as he had determined to take the first train for Milwaukee. Those who had accompanied him on the nerve-racking ordeal of the day were completely exhausted and sought their beds to sleep for hours, but not so the governor. Reaching Milwaukee he sat up with friends in a conference there until time to take a train for Madison where he arrived the next forenoon.

It was while on a similar trip in this vicinity that the governor, like the fugitive Alfred of old, also had appeared incognito at a farm house in Shawano county and begged a drink of milk and a bite to eat. A blooming daughter of the household waited on him and brought him a glass of rich, creamy milk. "Ah, that's fine," said the governor enthusiastically as he drained it off. "I am glad you like it," said the girl, "but I couldn't drink it if I was paid for it."

"Indeed!" said the astonished governor, "and what do you do with it all? I see you have a lot of fine cows here?"

"Well," replied the girl naively, "we give a good deal of it to calves."

With regard to personal violence the apprehension was even greater, and many marvel to this day that he escaped unscathed. It need no longer remain a secret that many friends even feared possible assassination, so tense was the state of the public mind. Yet he seemed absolutely without fear and to utterly disregard the murmurs and warnings of friends. Personal violence against representatives of authority as a rule has come from the oppressed classes or individuals with fancied grievances, but as LaFollette appeared in the role of "friend of the under dog" there was perhaps small need of apprehension from this source, and the powerful classes against which he directed his attacks were cautious in their attitude toward him, knowing his habit of having every charge thoroughly fortified with proof before launching it. Said one of his friends:

The fact is he kept them on the defensive. In the vernacular, he always "had them on the jump." The lobbyists, attorneys and paid henchmen of the railroads and other corporations that fought him were in a perpetual nightmare guessing what he would do next. He was the *momento mori* of their feasts, a specter sure to arise and impossible to lay whenever two or three were met in privilege's name. As a rule he struck at some totally unexpected place.

Yet now and then a tense situation would arise. At a small place in Pierce county James A. Frear, who introduced LaFollette, asked a prominent citizen to shake hands with the governor, whereupon the man turned away with the remark that he "would rather shake with a yellow dog." A partisan of the administration promptly whipped off his coat to thrash the offender, at which the governor sprang forward and laid a restraining hand on his friend's arm and thus averted possible bloodshed.

Governor LaFollette's daring charge that State Senator O. W. Mosher, as president of his company, had re-

ceived rebates of \$90,000 from a railroad company, caused his friends to have some apprehension as to his safety when on his way to visit Senator Mosher's home city of New Richmond. It was intimated that he would be met with violence if he renewed the charge there. LaFollette, however, renewed the charge and instead of encountering a hostile demonstration, was met with applause. It is interesting to note here that in the later campaign of 1910 Senator Mosher's successor in the senate was one of two democrats who pledged themselves to support LaFollette for United States senator in the event of any danger of his defeat in the legislature by a reactionary.

At many places the governor would be waited upon by leaders and delegations—friendly and hostile alike—who would take him aside and ask him to modify his address at their particular place so as to not unduly offend certain prominent citizens or interests of their town among whom his issues were not popular. Occasionally they would argue strenuously for their point, but as a rule the governor would reply: "I must make my speech in my own way whether it hurts anyone or not. I propose to hew to the line. This is no time for bouquets or soft words. We are getting none."

An interesting and typical meeting was that at Ellsworth in Pierce county. As was often the case elsewhere, the stalwarts had engaged the main hall in the city, not for a meeting but to prevent the governor from getting it, and had drilled their local workers to induce as many people as possible to keep away from the LaFollette meeting. A small hall was secured for the governor. Not only was it quickly filled, but the throng extended far into the street. Many crowded into the windows, stood up by the walls, or hung from clothes hooks through a long three hour speech filled with statistics, yet which they cheered throughout. The governor departed some-

what from his usual practice by here calling attention to the fact that he didn't have horns and referring to the tactics of the local stalwart leaders and to the newspaper abuse to which he was being subjected.

"I don't mind it for myself," he said, "but I have two boys and two girls whom I love as dearly as life itself, and I sometimes feel a regret that when I am gone they shall read in the files of the newspapers what was said of me. But my enemies cannot swerve me from my course nor make me quit this contest by abuse. Why, if I should die now you'd have to bury me standing up." (Tumultuous applause.)

How LaFollette was able to swing even hide-bound voters from the opposing party is recalled in a little incident in Pierce county. Assemblyman A. H. Dahl was canvassing the county and suggested to his driver that they stop at the house of a certain democrat while passing. The farmer was a quarter of a mile away in the fields. "It's no use," said the driver, "you'd have your climb up that hill for nothing. He's rabid, and you couldn't do anything with him in a hundred years." Nevertheless Dahl went to see the farmer and was very pleasantly surprised to learn that he intended to go to the republican caucus and vote for LaFollette delegates. "Yes, sir; I heard him this morning," he said (LaFollette had spoken for half an hour at the schoolhouse at 7 o'clock that morning) "and he's got the right ideas. I believe in backing him up."

"Well," said the surprised driver when Dahl returned, "how did you do it? We never could touch him before."

CHAPTER XXX

Rival Factions in the Field.

SHARP CAMPAIGN PRESSED BY BOTH SIDES—LAFOLLETTE ADOPTS AUTOMOBILE PLAN OF TRAVEL—LAFOLLETTE AND A. R. HALL SPEAK AT MILWAUKEE—COOK WITHDRAWS FROM TICKET AND SCOFIELD SUBSTITUTED—INCIDENTS OF FAST AND FURIOUS FINISH.

FERTILE in resources, LaFollette conceived the hitherto unusual idea of employing an automobile for campaign purposes. His experiences with special trains had been expensive and not altogether satisfactory. Besides the railroads were now making war on him and he was not disposed to ask any favors of them. Many timid and old-fashioned people feared for his safety or shook their heads in disapprobation at this departure, while the stalwarts sought to turn it to political account. "Behold this proof of insincerity," they cried; "here is the pretended champion of the poor and down-trodden using an automobile, the devil wagon, the toy of the rich! What inconsistency!" The idea was to attach to the governor by association the prejudice then existing in the rural mind against automobiles. It proved him at heart not in sympathy with the common people, "God's patient poor," they declared. Departing from his usual course, the governor once took occasion to notice these tactics. After setting forth the abuses that existed in the political and commercial life of the state, he said in his speech at Mazomanie:

And that is why I am traveling about in this way, by train, by carriage, by automobile—any way to get there—to tell you and the people of the state of these things. I want to reach as many people, and as quickly, as I can, and if airships were available I'd use them also.

Here, also, the governor talked intimately as to old neighbors, and among the notes taken down by a reporter who was present, but which were not published, were the following:

If I didn't feel deeply upon this subject (his reform program) do you suppose I would have devoted my life to it all these years, to have taken the heart out of my profession, and to have permitted my health to be broken down three times already? No, to this cause of taking the government out of the hands of a privileged few and bringing it back to the people, I will give all there is in me until it is accomplished. It is not the salary of \$5,000 a year I am after. When I went into this thing, I was already earning \$10,000 a year and had more calls from all parts of the state to help other attorneys than I could possibly meet. I could have gone to Chicago any day as a corporation attorney for \$15,000 a year, and I believe I could earn that now, and more, if I chose.

Now, our opponents may tell you a different story, but the fact is that the salary I am now drawing is not enough to keep my family and myself going. You see I have to put a good deal into the game myself to keep up the cause, and we must order our living and conduct the business of the state in a dignified manner. Why, if I didn't have a chance to go out every summer on the chautauqua platform and earn \$3,000 we would be in debt \$12,000 at the end of four years. We try to live economically, but at that we have put by the chance to lay up anything for our children's future. We understand each other at home; we have talked it all out and are agreed. I wish to leave something to the state more lasting than bronze or marble and a better legacy to my children than mere wealth. And I am not going to be swerved from my purpose; I have been called many names, but never a quitter. These great principles for which we are contending are eternally right and can't be killed off. Neither do I propose to be. Why, if I should be defeated the eighth of next November, you will find me out early on the morning of the ninth on a new campaign.

* * *

The story of the acquisition of this machine,—the "Red Devil," as it was derisively called,—for the governor's use is an interesting one, but need not here be given. When the governor set out with it September 1,

he was accompanied by his two sons, his secretary, Col. John J. Hannan, and a chauffeur. Several speeches were made that day, the first being at Dale at 8 o'clock in the morning, Hortonville, Shiocton and Appleton being the other places visited. Already on the first day out, said the *Milwaukee Sentinel*, the governor had caused two runaways and endangered the life of one woman going to market in the morning. But this method of travel proved most effective for the governor's cause. With a machine he could rapidly criss-cross a county on the eve of legislative caucuses and make many more speeches than if he depended on trains.

There were many amusing sides to this method of campaigning. One day he drove overland from Mt. Horeb to the Mazomanie meeting already referred to, nearly twenty miles, in a drizzling rain. He was late in arriving and talked beyond his set time limit. In order that he might reach his next town as nearly as possible on time he had to forego a dinner the citizens of Mazomanie had arranged for him and when he left town it was with a rubber hat pulled down over his head, a bottle of honey in one pocket of his dripping raincoat, the gift of a Mazomanie woman, and a glass fruit can of milk in his hands.

The governor's habit of carrying around milk bottles with him on his auto trips led to the brilliant idea by Dr. Fred Wilkins of Viroqua of attaching a rubber tube to a bottle so that the governor could drink with less danger. The governor laughingly demurred at this gift. "But you will have your teeth knocked out some time on these rough roads, if you don't," said the insistent physician. The governor finally consented to accept this new device. "But don't you dare tell the newspapers about this," said he, "or it will be all off with me."

Occasionally there would be several autos filled with friends and lieutenants in his party. If the governor's machine chanced to get clogged with mud, as not infre-

quently happened, he would climb into another and go on, and this process would be repeated until he reached his destination. In this way he arrived in the little town of Deerfield two hours behind time one dismal October day. The crowd was still waiting as he climbed stiffly out of his machine.

The governor had put in one of his most strenuous days of campaigning. The party included Governor LaFollette, his private secretary, Colonel Hannan, A. M. Stondall, candidate for state senator; John M. Nelson, and the two chauffeurs, L. F. Schoelkopf of Madison and William King of Whitewater. A raw southwester was blowing and a fine rain fell most of the afternoon, with a "heavy and coarse article" at Marshall, as Colonel Hannan put it.

A big crowd had gathered at Deerfield in the afternoon in anticipation of seeing the governor. Farmers' teams lined both sides of the streets, and the red-wristed tobacco growers of the neighborhood tapped the slushy sidewalks with their toes and cracked jokes to while away the time. Secretary A. T. Torge of the county committee, tried by telephone to learn the whereabouts of the missing party. A brass band also tried to keep things lively. When it became apparent that the governor would be late, A. R. Denu of Madison, whom Mr. Torge took along for such an emergency, was asked to give a short talk. He spoke for an hour and a half on state issues, being warmly applauded when he closed. Still the farmers waited, although they complained of neglected chores. Finally at 5 o'clock the party came in. The governor wore a mackintosh shoulder cape over his overcoat, and a small flat hat, and the entire party was spattered with mud from head to foot. Grim and bespattered as the governor looked, the people could not restrain a shout of laughter at the sight, whereat he smiled.

"That you, Bob?" said an admirer, slapping him familiarly on the shoulder. "It's me when you get through the mud," replied the bluff hero ungrammatically.

The governor was intent on going straight on to Stoughton, and promised to come again to Deerfield. However, he was finally persuaded to go up to the hall and say "hello" to the people. The crowd swarmed in, packing the hall. In his spattered maekintosh he mounted the stage amid shouts and laughter at the unusual spectacle. He apologized for the delay, told amusing incidents of it, regretted that he could not speak longer to his good Seandinavian friends and promised to come again to Deerfield. This with a season of hand-shaking satisfied the crowd.

The governor was inclined to push on at once, but finally took a hasty supper with the other hotel boarders, then got into a double rig with Mr. Nelson and Mr. Torge and set out sixteen miles overland to Stoughton in the dark, the driver being "Jake" Robinson, a trusted Jehu of the village. In their hurry they carried away a traveling man's grip and he wired them to have his nightshirt for him at Delavan next day or there would be trouble.

"Where's Colonel Hannan?" someone asked the governor.

"Oh, we left him on top of a hill some miles back, waiting for his machine to catch up with him," said the governor. "He looked like the statue of the Colossus of Rhodes as he stood and sorrowfully watched us go by."

A earriage was sent out and brought the portly military secretary of Wisconsin in at 7 o'clock. Then there was fun as he swaggered about and cracked jokes upon "the sacred soil of Dane county."

"There may be other issues in this campaign," he said, peeling the mud off his hat. "but I think the para-

mount issue is how to get an automobile through on time."

Another rig was sent out to bring in the stranded Mr. King. The auto was hitched to the back of the buggy and finally all were in Deerfield.

Mr. Denu was sent on to fill the governor's date at Cambridge. Mr. Hannan and Mr. Stondall came on to Madison by train, while the two chauffeurs remained in Deerfield over night and brought their machines back.

At 4 o'clock next morning Colonel Hannan took a train for Stoughton to join the governor in Jefferson county.

"I tell you this business of campaigning ain't a downy bed of ease," he said.

The governor's visit to Elkhorn, the seat of the strong stalwart county of Walworth, was made a notable occasion. While one of the capitals of stalwartism, Elkhorn nevertheless had an enthusiastic little group of administration supporters and these supporters determined to make his welcome specially cordial. They even succeeded in obtaining a promise to have the schools dismissed that the children might see the governor and share in the general holiday. It was felt that their presence would add to the cordiality of the welcome to be given the distinguished guest, so arrangements were made to dismiss them on the arrival of the governor's train.

However, a report reached the school that the train was late and would not reach Elkhorn for some hours. If the purpose of the report was to prevent the children from joining in the welcome to the governor it succeeded well as the schools remained in session until noon. In the meantime the governor's train had come in on time.

But the children were not to be beaten out of their holiday. The teachers returned to the schoolhouse in the afternoon, but not so the pupils, so school was declared off for the remainder of the day. When the high school principal, Prof. Thomas J. Jones, later appeared

at the political meeting he was escorted to a seat on the platform at the front to the great merriment of his pupils, who were already in the hall.

At Neenah, October 27, was presented the interesting spectacle of two rival republican meetings, one addressed by Governor LaFollette, the other by M. G. Jeffris, the stalwart spellbinder. The same day a similar spectacle was presented at Green Bay in a republican meeting addressed by LaFollette on one hand, and another addressed by Congressman Theodore Burton of Ohio, under the auspices of the national republican committee, three brands of republicanism being thus exploited in the valley of the Fox that day. The managers of the paper mills and other factories refused to close the shops and let the workmen hear the governor, but closed them for the Jeffris meeting. At this J. H. Dennhardt, a LaFollette supporter, organized a group of school children which cheered LaFollette at the Jeffris meeting.

At Oconomowoc November 2, the governor took advantage of the presence in the audience of one Adam Blanchard to say that his delegates had been bought away from him in the state convention of 1896 and that Blanchard was one of the men who was offered a bribe and refused it. At this statement Blanchard arose and said: "Every word of that is true, as there is a living God."

Keenly appreciating its value as a political stroke on the eve of election the administration on October 31 issued a statement that all state taxes of the coming year would be remitted. This was one of its practical replies to the stalwart charges of extravagance in state affairs. Attention was also called to the fact that the taxes of the previous year likewise had been remitted. In addition the statement was made that the estimated increase in railway taxation for the year 1905 would be \$659,000.

Governor LaFollette had also recently ordered that suits be brought against the railroads for unpaid back taxes of which Railroad Commissioner Thomas had reported the discovery. In order to counteract the effect of this stroke of the administration the stalwart press printed a story the following day that the state treasury was short by \$235,000. To strike the balance of truth between such and other conflicting statements and claims were among the problems thus presented to the voter who felt an interest in them.

In the closing week of the campaign LaFollette on three successive nights made five addresses in the city of Milwaukee, the last one in the Exposition building,—the scene of his first convention triumph,—before what was pronounced one of the largest political audiences ever assembled in the state. This last meeting had a unique interest from the fact that Albert R. Hall spoke from the same platform with the governor, opening the speech-making with a plea for LaFollette. It was perhaps the first and only time in which these two men, the pre-eminent leaders in the Wisconsin revolution, appeared together before an audience. In scarcely more than six months LaFollette was to stand beside the open casket of his resolute patriot friend and pronounce a eulogy upon him. It was in this Milwaukee speech that LaFollette "named the men" in connection with his charge of bribery at the convention of 1896.

The same night a unique speech was made at Kenosha by Charles Quarles, brother of Senator Quarles, who cited the "twenty sins of LaFollette," among which were named extravagance, money from book companies, game warden abuses, the Kempf entanglement, slandering of the state, debauching of the university, packing of the supreme court, Chautauqua lecturing, dictation, stealing of state conventions, etc., all formally set forth in legal impeachment phrase. In an address some days before

Congressman Cooper had referred to "the party of Lincoln, Grant, McKinley and LaFollette." "Could there be a better anti-climax?" exclaimed Quarles. "Lincoln to LaFollette! Hyperion to a satyr! Lincoln, with malice toward none; with charity to all. LaFollette, with venom, vengeance and vituperation!"

Governor LaFollette was scheduled to close this nerve-racking campaign with a speech to the university students and his townspeople at the university gymnasium the Saturday night before election. Col. Hugh Lewis, a one-armed veteran and ardent partisan of the governor, was chosen to preside at the meeting. Realizing this would be a remarkable occasion, he arranged to have it marked with certain distinctive features, one of which was to seat on the platform with other "prominents" a half hundred old soldiers as a living refutation of the charge that the governor did not have the good will of the veterans.

The governor was met at the station by Colonel Lewis and others, who found to their dismay that he was so hoarse that he could scarcely talk. They thought of the splendid audience that would await him and of the disappointment if he should not be able to speak. Rushing him to the executive residence, they spent about ten minutes flushing his throat and then set out for the gymnasium, already late for the meeting and where they found a constantly growing crowd that filled the great hall to the doors. Again they thought of that lost voice.

But again was the governor to prove a surprise. In the presence of his splendid, inspiring and sympathetic audience his hoarseness soon disappeared and he spoke with remarkable power for two and three-quarters hours. "Dangerous," said Colonel Lewis, shaking his gray head afterward. "I wish he wouldn't take such chances on killing himself. One hour would have been enough."

No one who heard that speech is apt to soon forget it. Unfortunately no stenographic report of it has come

down. Even the *Milwaukee Free Press* carried only a scant notice of it. One of its striking features was the governor's merciless arraignment of great oil monopolies for their gross violations of law and morals.

Not often does LaFollette abandon the careful phrase and familiar climax, but on this occasion he seemed fired by some higher inspiration—the spontaneous eloquence of righteous passion—as he depicted the onward progress of one such commercial monster—not alone in its larger public sins of demanding rebates, of seizing railroads or compelling them to conspire with it, of ruthlessly grabbing the coal and oil fields of Pennsylvania, of wrecking towns to build up others and destroying rivals to seize their business; but, more reprehensible still, how step by step it had stalked over the oil fields of Ohio and Indiana, crushing out the small independent refiners, evicting from their lands farmers too poor to fight for their property, driving out widows and orphans whose only sin was living in their own homes and within the law, and leaving in its wake a trail of poverty, insanity and suicide—all this he poured forth in a towering climacteric of passion that swept his responsive audience up to inspired heights.

It was an indictment such as in olden time would have sent a Roman audience out sword in hand, and an Athenian to cry, "Let us go against Philip!" Not here had any apologist dared suggest the defense always urged, that such practices had at least cheapened the price of the product.

"What shall we do?" asked the editor of the *State Journal* distractedly of Judge Keyes the Monday morning following. "It was a speech that made votes; it made votes!"

On the same evening Senator Spooner addressed a great audience in Milwaukee. In spite of the supreme court's decision that the LaFollette ticket was entitled

to the place of regularity on the official ballot, he prefaced his speech with the declaration, "I represent here tonight what is called the opera house platform, made by the only legal convention held by the republican party in Wisconsin this year." Continuing the war on LaFollette to the end, he subjected the governor through a three-hour speech to a merciless arraignment for usurpation, tyranny and fraud.

In the audience were several squads of young LaFollette men who repeatedly applauded the speaker's mention of the governor's name, whereupon the senator finally forestalled them by substituting the name "Smith" for that of "LaFollette."

The speaker roundly denounced the governor's railroad commission bill. "That bill, if passed into a law," he said, "would close more factories and bring more disaster than any other measure ever devised. Now what is the condition? We had a rate commission in 1874, and after it had been tested in the courts the legislature repealed it because it touched injuriously almost every hamlet in the state. It took the elasticity out of rates which enables the railroads to adapt their rates to the needs of their different localities. * * * This bill puts the business of the state on a mileage basis; that the railroads shall not charge more for a longer than a shorter haul unless this commission says it may. That means to rob every competitive point in this state of competition. What a power to put into the hands of a commission appointed by Governor—Smith!"

In closing this remarkable speech the senator said:

"Now, in conclusion, this man LaFollette informs us that if we beat him on November 8 on November 9 he commences again. In olden times they used to think that a suicide walked and consequently they buried a suicide where four roads met and drove a stake through him to keep him down. Now, I tell you what we are going to do Tuesday. We will drive through LaFollette

such a stake in the shape of such an enormous plurality that even his ghost will see that it is vain to try to walk again."

Also, on the same evening, Senator J. V. Quarles in a speech at Fond du Lac, said:

"How long can the party last under such leadership as this? LaFollette has debauched the legislature and even tried to elect the next legislature. If the king of England tried such a thing the people would take off his head. If the president tried it he would be impeached."

Such were the respects paid the governor of their own state by two United States senators of professedly the same political faith as his and on the very eve of an election.

CHAPTER XXXI

A Fateful Election.

INTENSE INTEREST TAKEN IN OUTCOME OF CAMPAIGN—NATIONAL ISSUES FORGOTTEN—STALWARTS THROW SUPPORT TO PECK—LA-FOLLETTE RE-ELECTED—RECEIVES FLOOD OF CONGRATULATIONS—SIGNIFICANCE OF ELECTION—LA-FOLLETTE'S LONG CONTEST FINALLY WON.

THE factional rivalry toward the close of the campaign was so fast and furious that the people of Wisconsin practically lost sight of the fact that a national election was impending. Realizing the hopelessness of defeating LaFollette through the Scofield ticket, the stalwart press and leaders openly urged the support of the democratic state ticket. Enormous quantities of sample ballots were sent throughout the state with a cross marked in the circle at the head of the republican ticket, but with lines drawn through the republican state and legislative tickets, and crosses after the corresponding democratic names, thus indicating to the voter how he could vote the republican national ticket and at the same time help defeat the republican state candidates. The national republican (Scofield) state ticket was ignored.

At a big stalwart meeting in Milwaukee addressed by Senator Spooner the Saturday night before election a feature of the opening was a song by a local lawyer running in part as follows:

And when you've done your duty and 'LaFollette's voted out,
We'll raise a great hosannah and a grand triumphal shout;
And your sons and your great-grandsons will commemorate the day
When you regained your freedom from the petty tyrant's sway.
So forward into battle, and his despotism check,
With one big vote for Roosevelt and a great big vote for Peck.

Also the *Milwaukee Sentinel* said on November 1:

The only way to unseat this autocrat is to defeat him at the polls next Tuesday. In order to do this it may be necessary for the

republicans to make sacrifices. But it must be remembered that the defeat of Disturber LaFollette is the paramount issue in this campaign.

And on the day before election the *Sentinel* printed two full pages of newspaper clippings calling for the defeat of LaFollette.

Indeed Secretary Bentley, of the stalwart state central committee, said, on the day after election :

The so-called stalwarts to a man supported the national republican ticket, while with almost equal unanimity they supported Governor Peck, and find no reason for concealing the fact.

The outcome of the election was awaited with the greatest interest throughout the country and with the keenest anxiety by many of the governor's friends. The metropolitan papers began issuing extras as soon as the returns began coming in, for every point had its angle of interest in the contest. It soon became evident that LaFollette had been re-elected and hundreds of telegrams of congratulation poured in upon him. As indicating the wide range and warmth of interest taken in the outcome, a few of these felicitations may be reproduced :

St. Paul—Hearty congratulations over your splendid victory against such tremendous odds. Greetings to all.—S. R. Van Sant. (Governor of Minnesota.)

Chicago—Both Mrs. Yates and I are gratified beyond measure by your victory.—Richard Yates. (Governor of Illinois.)

Des Moines—I congratulate you most heartily.—A. B. Cummins. (Governor of Iowa.)

Cheyenne, Wyo.—Wisconsin and the entire country are to be congratulated on your election. Your fight for right on behalf of the people is a splendid example to young men. It gives confidence in the ultimate triumph of honesty.—Fennimore Chatterton.

Chicago—I rejoice in your victory. Sorry I was not a resident of Wisconsin yesterday.—Charles H. Avery.

Atlantic City, N. J.—You have won the great victory. Accept my congratulations.—W. M. Riddle. (Mr. Riddle was a contributor to LaFollette's campaign fund and has a framed acknowledgment hanging in his library.)

Boston—Hearty congratulations. Hope you may reap full fruits of victory.—Reed of Taunton.

Denver—I congratulate you upon your splendid victory.—J. C. Roberts.

Reinbeck, Ia.—Congratulations. Interest in your behalf in Cedar Rapids and state was intense.—G. A. Newall.

New York—Please accept my hearty, hearty, hearty congratulations.—Wilbur F. Wakeman.

Norfolk, Va.—Congratulate yourself and people of Wisconsin on your election.—C. M. Secker.

Oconto, Wis.—Le jour de gloire est arrive.—O. F. Trudell.

Ft. Atkinson, Wis.—“Why did the heathen rage and imagine vain things?” The house of Hoard, children and grandchildren, join in a heartfelt shout of gratulation over your great justification by the people.—W. D. Hoard.

Chicago—I heartily congratulate you upon your splendid victory.—John Anderson, publisher “Skandinaven.”

Yankton, S. D.—Our heartiest congratulations and good wishes. All at hospital join in this.—L. C. Mead.

Portland, Ore.—Another great victory. Accept my congratulations.—Jay S. Hamilton.

Brodhead, Wis.—Praise the Lord, oh, my soul.—Mrs. Burr Sprague.

Louisville, Ky.—Everyone who heard you at Vincennes will rejoice in the triumph of representative government in Wisconsin, which I trust will prove a splendid object lesson for the rest of the states of the union.—J. O. Pace.

St. Louis—Hearty congratulations on your election.—Knute Teman.

Philadelphia—Hearty congratulations. Glamis thou art and shalt be king hereafter.—J. J. Collins.

Former Governor George W. Peck, the democratic candidate for governor, sent the following:

Milwaukee—Returns seem to show that you are elected and I congratulate you and send the best wishes of myself and family to you and your family. You have made a brave fight and deserve to be happy and I wish you may be.

Green Bay—Fearless fight unprecedented in history. Victory crowns your efforts. Governor, you have my sincerest congratulations. Brown county by 1,400.—Fred Warren.

Chicago—To quote the Tribune, “This is a proud day for Wisconsin.” Glamis thou art and Cawdor shalt be.—J. W. Hiner.

Duluth—Among the good things of yesterday nothing pleases me more than your election.—Fred A. Teall.

Sacramento—Congratulations on your re-election and ratification of the primary law.—Frank F. Atkinson.

Kearney, Neb.—Accept my congratulations upon your re-election as governor.—W. H. H. Richardson.

New York—Hearty congratulations and good wishes. Four years from today hope to congratulate you on your presidential election.—Richard Lloyd Jones.

Sioux Falls, S. D.—Accept my hearty congratulations. The right shall prevail.—Ray Williams.

New York—Hearty congratulations.—J. C. Garrison.

On the official count LaFollette had a plurality of 50,952. The vote was: LaFollette, republican, 227,253; Peek, democrat, 176,301; Arnold, social democrat, 24,857; Seofield, national republican, 12,136; Clark, prohibitionist, 8,764; Minkley, social labor, 249; total, 449,560.

On the night of election the rooms in the executive office were jammed with a surging, exultant crowd which had gathered to hear the results of the election and to extend felicitations to the governor upon the great victory. Men of all classes met and jostled one another, officials, laborers, professors, farmers. They sprawled over the tables and chairs, all shaking hands, slapping one another familiarly and passing the latest news. “—— county goes for LaFollette!” shouts the man at the telephone, waving impatiently to the noisy crowd that he may get more of the message. But it is to no avail; in the vernacular, it is “all off.” A hundred hats fly to the ceiling and a shout that seems to shake the building goes up at the news that some rock-ribbed citadel of stalwartism has been finally taken. One after another such reports come in and the crowd becomes more and more demonstrative.

In a small inner office the governor is seated. A chair has been set upon a low broad box in one corner and he has been crowded into it. About him are his chief lieutenants. The venerable, imperturbable General Bryant,

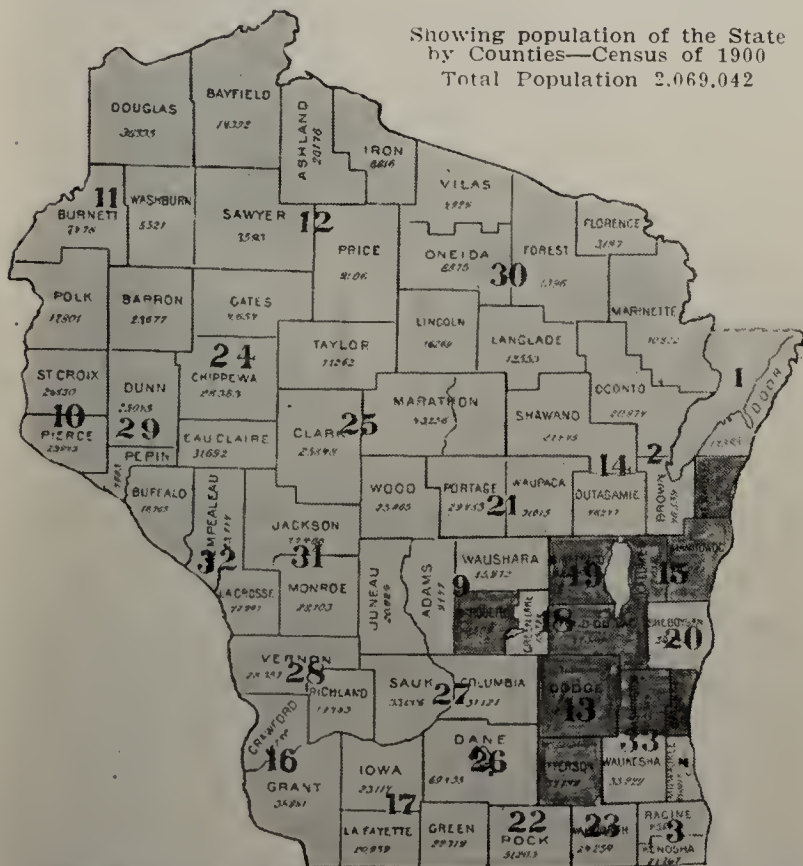
SENATE DISTRICT MAP OF WISCONSIN

Apportionment 1901.

Regular Session.

Showing population of the State
by Counties—Census of 1900

Total Population 2,069,042

POPULATION OF SENATORIAL
DISTRICTS.(Dists. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, Milwaukee
County.)

	Pop.
1st District.....	65,617
2d ".....	67,233
3d ".....	67,351
9th ".....	61,487
10th ".....	50,773
11th ".....	61,614
12th ".....	64,050
13th ".....	46,631
14th ".....	73,722
15th ".....	59,339
16th ".....	56,167
17th ".....	66,792
18th ".....	63,386
19th ".....	58,225
20th ".....	66,708

21st	61,098
22d	51,203
23d	64,048
24th	64,729
25th	69,104
26th	69,435
27th	64,127
28th	47,834
29th	73,390
30th	53,835
31st	66,198
32d	66,111
33d	58,818

MILWAUKEE CO. DISTS.

4th	61,035
5th	69,196
6th	71,771
7th	63,533
8th	64,482

Election 1904, dark counties carried by Peck

his political godfather, sits at his feet; Chynoweth, his undaunted, immovable legal adviser and heavy hitter, is there; Roe, his former law partner; Crawford Harper, Bryan Castle, Charles E. Buell, "Al" Rogers, his alert, tactful man Friday; Torge and Ed Shaffer, who have ridden through miles of mud to get out the rural vote; George Post, Tom Nelson, Gratz, Ed Gibbs, Ernest Warner, great ward workers; beardless students, keenly alive, who have fought the good fight for him all day "on the hill;" farmers who have come through miles of fog and rain to tell of their battles for the right; democrats who have been borne over to him in the enthusiasm of the conflict—these with scores of others crowd about. And above them all, like a king upon his throne, sits the hero of the hour, his strong intellectual face literally glowing with enthusiasm and animation, infectious, unforgettable, dispatching orders to couriers here, receiving messages there, and shaking hands right and left.

"The governor is wanted at the telephone!" shouts Tom Purtell; "no one else will do!" A German farmer is at the other end of the line, a resident of one of the hitherto always democratic German townships in the northern part of the county; a man who through a generation has borne contumely and ostracism because of his republican convictions, but who has always come up smiling and unwearied at every fight, and who has been unflinching in his advocacy of the governor's reforms. His hour of triumph has come at last. He tells the governor that he has carried his town for him. "Good for you, Matt!" shouts the governor in reply; "I cannot thank you enough for what you have always done for me. Tell the boys I appreciate deeply their good work."

But the old farmer could not catch the governor's message. His voice came up dimly from the far countryside. "I don't can hear you!"

"Tell the boys," said the governor more loudly, "that I appreciate deeply their good work."

Still the old man could not hear and the governor repeated his message more slowly and in his best voice; but all to no avail. Yet another attempt failed.

"Vell," shouted the governor, as a happy thought seized him, "tell de poys dey done tam vell!"

"All right, Pob," came the foggy reply.

This historic scene was the last of quite its kind that the old executive office witnessed and its counterpart in interest and unusual features has scarcely been approximated in the state's history. When a few men now sit around a table, as is the rule, and quietly receive and compare election returns the old-timers present who witnessed and remember that other scene are prone to observe in wistful reminiscence, "Those were the days!"

With the election of 1904 LaFollette's great fight was finally and decisively won, and its story, in so far as it deals with stratagem and battle, may here fittingly close. The legislature chosen at the same election was ultimately to write all the demands of the party upon the statute books and thus clear the way for the governor's entrance again upon the larger national field. As indicated in the flood of felicitations that poured in upon the governor, the victory was of profound national import. One distant metropolitan daily pronounced it of much greater significance than the re-election of President Roosevelt.

In the recent general uprising of American democracy for a larger and freer life and to vindicate the justice and wisdom of its establishment, the first and most brilliant victory, considering the obstacles encountered, was achieved in Wisconsin. The splendid conclusion of the ten-year "holy war" everywhere gave cheer to believers in democracy and the psychological effect of the first ringing note of victory upon the expectant ear of the nation was profound. A great state had given a new

significance to its motto of "Forward" and pointed the way for other confused and irresolute commonwealths.

A golden age in point of creative achievement, such as often accompanies great political convulsions, has followed, not without its crudities and abuses and wrongs, but these must be ever incidental to progress and the readjustment of standards. When history in time shall have stripped away details and ephemeral elements the constructive achievements of this period of state rebuilding will stand out in clearer relief and their worth and value be more justly judged.

While the antagonisms and animosities engendered by the LaFollette agitations have in many instances been unfortunate they must be regarded as weighing but lightly when cast in the balance with the larger general good resulting from them. The issues waged have proved irritating and unsettling to the political mind, but if democracy is to endure society must be kept fluid to prevent crystallization into classes and castes, and occasional upheavals such as these are but manifestations of a virile state of the body politic, a sign that beneath its exterior live hopeful potentialities that make for freedom and progress. The Wisconsin revolution was in its field but a phase of the world-old phenomenon. Ever have been and ever will be found in human evolution two contending elements—reformers, restless, forevisioned, impatiently thundering for progress, and those who see only ruin in their projects or at least are not yet ready to advance. Today one may be in the ascendancy, tomorrow the other.

With peoples, nations and parties, as with individuals, periods of activity, exertion, achievement, are often followed by like periods of repose, often of retrogression. Believers in democracy and the progressive advancement of society will, however, continue to look eastward. Progress and reaction may alternate, movements and civil-

izations run their courses and die, yet each succeeding century, building on the old, gains something of value from its predecessor, not always apparent yet none the less real.

Although 'tis weary watching wave by wave,
Yet the tide moves onward;
We build like corals grave by grave,
That pave a pathway sun-ward.
We are driven backward from the fray,
A newer strength to borrow,
And where the vanguard camps today
The rear will camp tomorrow.

In the flowering of their genius for democracy the people of the state have found a new freedom, dignity and security whose happy promise lies like a shaft of light across the land. The safeguarding and nurturing of the fruits of the victory achieved must depend upon the vigilance of the people of a great commonwealth, the inexorable price of the receding but ever fairer ideal of liberty. Rights and liberties must be exercised to be preserved, for it is in the history of most righteous reforms that those who have most strongly opposed them have come to profess to accept and defend them, once they are established, and in the consequent suspension or cessation of strife, openly or insidiously to seize upon the new machinery to serve new selfish ends. Thus the victories won, often at great sacrifice, for humanity and progress, may eventually prove to have been largely in vain.

It is an endless battle to be free;
As the old dangers lessen from the skies
New perils arise;
Down the long centuries eternally,
Again, again will rise Thermopylae—
Again, again a new Leonidas.
New Lexington on Lexington will rise,
And many a valorous Warren fall
Upon the imperilled wall.
Man is the conscript of an endless quest,
A long divine adventure without rest.

APPENDIX

LaFollette Pioneer in Conservation Movement.

MESSAGE SENT BY GOVERNOR LAFOLLETTE TO WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE IN SPRING OF 1905—ONE OF FIRST NOTES IN CONSERVATION MOVEMENT, PRECEDING BY SOME YEARS THE ACTION TAKEN BY PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT.

IN THE legislative session of 1901 bills for eighteen dams on the Wolf river were introduced, backed principally by Assemblyman D. E. Riordan of Eagle River. These measures would have given practical control of the whole river to the owners of the dams, and when the assembly chairman having the measures in hand laid the situation before Governor LaFollette the latter promptly urged the killing of the scheme. It was this incident and others of similar character that led to the message given below:

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATION

State of Wisconsin,
Executive Chamber,
Madison, April 12, 1905.

To the Honorable, the Legislature:

Five hundred and sixteen laws granting franchises to dam navigable streams within this state have been passed since the organization of the territory of Wisconsin. Formerly many of these grants were for logging purposes. The great reduction in lumbering within the last few years has considerably decreased the number of grants made in aid of logging and lumbering. Notwithstanding this fact, the demand for franchises to build dams across the navigable streams of the state, seems to be increasing. It is therefore, clearly manifest that capital has awakened to the opportunities which these waterpowers offer for permanent investment. It is certainly desirable that this should be encouraged in every proper way.

It has, heretofore, been the policy of the state to grant to any party seeking the same, the right to build dams across navigable streams anywhere within the limits of the commonwealth. Pro-

vided that its action does not conflict with the action of congress upon the same subject, the state has the undoubted authority to determine where and under what conditions dams may be constructed across its navigable waters. The only conditions which it has attached to grants of this character up to the present time, are the right to amend or repeal the same, and the requirement that fishways shall be maintained in all dams. It is the law that the structure must improve the navigation of the stream. Whenever those applying for these franchises have sought the authority, the legislature has freely conferred upon them the right to condemn and take the lands of others, and overflow the same, by providing effective statutory proceedings to that end.

Probably not more than half a dozen states in the union are so abundantly supplied with natural waterpower as Wisconsin and no state in the middle west is comparable to it in this respect. More than one thousand lakes, widely distributed within its borders, form natural reservoirs, furnishing sources of supply to the streams which flow through every section of the state.

We have recently undertaken, at considerable expense, the establishment of a forestry commission with a view of preserving whatever remains of the forests upon state lands not suited to agriculture, and the re-forestation of those, and such other lands as can most profitably be used for that purpose. The state forestry legislation, adopted two years ago, very defective in many respects, will, it is hoped, be so amended as to establish this important work upon a permanent and efficient basis. It is referred to in this connection because the preservation of our forests and the re-forestation of lands about the sources and along the head waters of our principal streams, are absolutely essential to the preservation of Wisconsin's splendid waterpowers. The restoration of our forests, and the preservation of our waterpowers go hand in hand. It therefore behooves the legislature to exercise the utmost caution in granting franchises to dam streams and flood lands, lest legislation for the protection of forests and streams be not undone in flooding state lands and destroying tree-growth, just where, for every reason, it should be protected.

In the early life of states and municipalities franchises are freely granted for the building of ferries and bridges, turnpikes, railroads, and street railways. Liberal donations of moneys and lands are frequently bestowed upon those receiving the franchises. Eager to secure rapid development, little thought is taken for the future, and no consideration given to the proper restrictions or limitations to be imposed upon those who are the beneficiaries of these valuable public grants.

Our navigable streams and rivers, like our streets and highways, are open to the free use of the people of the state. No one can acquire ownership in these waters. If the public through legislation, grants franchises, surrendering the use of any of its navigable waters to individuals or corporations, it is entitled to a reasonable consideration therefor. This it may not choose to take as a money consideration, but the state cannot do less than recognize the rights of the public, in making reasonable reservations at the time it confers the grants. The franchises so taken in many cases, grant rights of great and rapidly increasing value. The vast amount of power which these waters produce is a resource of a public nature, in the advantage and benefit of which the public should participate.

Modern industrial development is making rapid progress. Already these waterpowers are extensively employed to generate electricity. The transmission of this power over considerable distances is successfully accomplished with little loss. It will, in the near future, be more widely distributed at a constantly diminishing cost. In manufacturing, in electric lighting in cities and towns and in the country, in operating street and interurban cars for the transportation of passengers and freight, and in furnishing motive power for the factory and the farm, electricity will eventually become of great importance in the industrial life of our commonwealth.

It is, therefore, quite apparent that these waterpowers are no longer to be regarded simply as of local importance. They are of industrial and commercial interest to every community in the state. Whether it be located in the immediate neighborhood of a waterpower will, in time, make little or no difference. While this is becoming more manifest year by year, it is probably true that we do not, as yet, approximately estimate the ultimate value of these waterpowers to the people of Wisconsin.

It must, therefore, be apparent that this subject, broadly considered, is of profound interest to the people of this commonwealth. If the policy of the state with respect to these franchises ought to be changed at all, it certainly ought to be changed now. Reserving the right to amend or repeal is not enough. When rich and powerful companies, availing themselves of these grants, acting in concert, seek to resist amendment or repeal, their influence will prove a very serious obstacle. Economic conditions are rapidly changing in this state and in the country. A legislative policy which grants franchises without substantial conditions amply protecting the public, and securing to it reasonable benefits in return, is neither right nor just, and ought no longer to be tolerated. The

capital already invested, industries already established, may in a few years find themselves quite at the mercy of power companies in combined control of the waterpower of the state.

Such investigations as I have been able to make of the subject plainly indicate that many of the grants to construct dams heretofore passed by the legislature, have been secured purely for speculative purposes. In such cases no improvements whatever have been made. The grants have been held awaiting opportunities to sell the same with large profit to the holders, who have not invested a dollar for the benefit of the state, or its industrial development. It is obvious that those franchises may be gathered up, and consolidated with others which have been granted where improvements have been made, and prices advanced until the state, municipalities, and the public will be compelled to pay an exorbitant rate for the power upon which we are likely to grow more and more dependent as time passes.

It is submitted to your honorable body that the time has come to give this subject the careful consideration which its great importance demands. I believe that the state should encourage the development of its natural resources, including its waterpower system, in so far as it may properly do so; but the obligation rests upon those charged with the responsibility and clothed with authority, to encourage this development under such conditions as will justly and fairly protect the public rights in these great natural advantages.

I therefore recommend that in all grants of this character hereafter made, it shall be provided:

First. That failure to exercise the rights granted under the franchise within a period of two years shall operate as a forfeiture of the same.

Second. That whenever the power acquired under and by virtue of the franchise shall be operated, or its operation suspended, pursuant to any contract, agreement, or understanding, express or implied, in violation of any law of the state, or of the federal government, the franchise shall be forfeited forthwith.

Third. That whenever power acquired under and by virtue of the franchise shall be offered for sale that some reasonable provision shall be made for the protection of the state, of municipalities, of corporations and individuals in the purchase of such power at reasonable rates therefor.

Fourth. That the franchise so granted shall be subject to taxation by the state through its tax commission or state board of assessment.

I further recommend the passage of a general law repealing all

such franchises granted prior to January 1, 1903, where the dams have not been built pursuant to the grant; and that the further provisions, hereinbefore recommended, for all grants hereafter to be made, be incorporated in such general act and adopted as amendments to all grants of like character heretofore made, in so far as applicable.

The United States geological survey has for two years been engaged in an investigation of the waterpowers of Wisconsin. This work determines the location and rating in horsepower of each of the dams upon the principal rivers of the state. I am advised that it would be possible for the state to secure at this time the substantial results of this investigation. I believe that the legislature should authorize the employment of a civil engineer by the state, to complete the work, covering all the streams upon which grants have been made for the erection of dams, locating the same, and reporting whether the improvements have been made and maintained, or whether the same have not been improved, the character of the waterpower, where one exists, and its approximate horsepower rating, the use made of the same, and the names of its present owners. Such investigation should also include data as to the location, and the approximate horsepower rating of undeveloped waterpowers upon all of the streams of the state. These facts, when ascertained, should be reported to the next legislature in a form which should enable it to act intelligently in granting franchises in the future. If the state avails itself of the work already done in this direction by the federal government, it can be completed in a few months, at a cost of not to exceed one thousand dollars.

Respectfully submitted,

ROBERT M. LAFOLLETTE,
Governor.

PIONEER PROGRESSIVES IN WISCONSIN

The following names of local pioneer leaders in the LaFollette reform movement have been furnished for each county by one or more of the prominent workers mentioned. The names are such as occurred to the correspondents as among those who were early active in the reform movement. Many more might, of course, be added of men entitled to credit in advancing the cause in their respective localities:

ADAMS COUNTY—John P. Lewis, G. W. Bingham, C. H. Gilman, Friendship; John A. Henry, Easton.

ASHLAND COUNTY—F. C. Smith, J. A. Cobb, B. O. Olson, Pearcee Tompkins, George McLeod, John Sandstrom, John Cannovan, Lewis Anderson, Robert Parsons, Charles McGully, Peter Hanson, James Good, William Nohl, J. K. Parish, Andrew Peterson, N. P. Anderson, Charles Bloss, O. H. Berg, A. W. Sanborn, Ashland; J. G. Stoltz, Glidden; Charles Kleinsteinber, Butternut.

BARRON COUNTY—Henry S. Comstock, Samuel Palmer, T. M. Purtell, Cumberland; Clarence C. Coe, Barron; Andrew G. Strand, O. H. Ingram, W. W. Dietz, Rice Lake; J. M. Rossbach, George E. Scott, L. J. Breen, Prairie Farm; O. H. Gulickson, Cameron; John H. Johnson, Maple Grove; William Simpson, Canton.

BAYFIELD COUNTY—William O'Neill, L. N. Clausen, Nels N. Osear, Nels Nelson, Washburn; Peter Savage, Editor *Iron River Pioneer*, Iron River; William Knight, Bayfield.

BROWN COUNTY—Fred D. Miller, S. H. Cady, Roland T. Burdon, Gustave Kuestermann, C. A. Armstrong, G. A. Buengner, Charles Kerr, Lewis Findeisen, John Rasmussen, Fred B. Warren, Sol. P. Huntington, Fred Hurlburt, Green Bay; B. F. Smith, Paul L. Halline, editor *Depere News*; J. P. Dousman, Depere.

BUFFALO COUNTY—W. L. Houser, C. W. Gilman, James Dillon, Mondovi; F. J. Bohri, H. E. Roettiger, Fountain City; E. F. Ganz, editor *Buffalo County Journal*, Alma; John Meili, editor *Landsmann*, Cochrane; J. W. Wood, Independence.

BURNETT COUNTY—Ole Erickson, Simon Thoreson, A. J. Myrland, Tobias Thoreson, A. M. Clementson, A. E. Nelson, Fred S. Christianson, A. A. Anderson, E. L. Peet, Grantsburg; Frank Frolander, Andrew Peterson. Andrew Anderson, Trade Lake; August Cassell, A. G. Peterson, Charles Blomgren, Faleum; Daniel Johnson,

Siren; Robert C. Anderson, Matt Johnson, Anderson; Isaac Lundquist, John Hillstrand, A. H. Borgman, Marshland; H. J. Halberg, E. G. Maxwell, E. H. Ever-son, Robert Magnuson, William B. Connor, Menon; E. M. Stewart, William E. Armstrong, J. A. McCarthy, S. H. Arnes, H. C. Hanson, Rusk; Frank Fahland, Coomer.

CALUMET COUNTY—William Knauf, Andrew Noll. Chilton.

CHIPPEWA (AND RUSK)—Dr. P. H. Lindley, Casper Lebeis, Joseph Riley, H. M. Town, Magnus Furth, Thomas Roycraft, W. W. Potter, John W. Thomas, Chippewa Falls; Theodore M. Thomas, Ladysmith (Rusk county).

CLARK COUNTY—Spencer M. Marsh, Frank T. Tucker, George E. Crothers, F. W. Draper, L. M. Sturdevant, John Huntzicker, F. M. Jackson, O. W. Schoengarth, C. M. Bradford, John Dwyer, Neillsville; W. S. Irvine, Loyal.

COLUMBIA COUNTY—A. A. Porter, editor *Portage Register*; Charles Mohr, Jr., W. C. Gault, Dr. A. C. Kellogg, J. C. Mackenzie, Portage; E. E. Haight, E. V. Laughlin, Dr. L. A. Squire, P. W. Mackenzie, W. H. Everett, Poynette; L. N. Coapman, Dr. C. E. Wintermute, Frank Marshall, Solomon Brown, Don French, Kilbourn; H. Stanley, John Dooley, Wyocena; George Hopkins, John R. Davies, Cambria; George Wylie, Leeds; W. H. Cobb, Stephen Hanson, Henry Thompson, Par-deeville; Dr. F. S. Verbeek, Sam Watson, George Gordon, Lodi; James R. Hastie, Dekorra; W. C. Leitsch, W. R. Turner, Columbus; Robert Wilson, Okee; H. A. Hanson, J. A. Johnson, C. P. Caldwell, Rio; W. H. McElroy, Marcellon; P. J. Rasmussen, Lewiston; Charles Anaeker, Ft. Winnebago; G. O. Underdahl, Hampden, Joseph Sanderson, Randolph; Theodore Henton, Otsego; George McMillan, Arlington; Leonard Holl, Anton Jerrison, Caledonia; James H. Hasey, town of Columbus.

CRAWFORD COUNTY—Atley Peterson, James O. Davidson, Dr. A. J. McDowell, James Dinsdale, Soldiers Grove; A. H. Long, E. I. Kidd, A. C. Wallin, J. D. Stuart, G. L. Miller, Prairie du Chien; E. E. Sherwood, Mt. Sterling.

DANE COUNTY—George E. Bryant, S. A. Harper, H. W. Chynoweth, Dr. W. W. Gill, Gilbert E. Roe, A. G. Zimmerman, E. Ray Stevens, J. C. Harper, C. A. Harper, Ernest N. Warner, A. T. Torge, C. E. Buell, Thomas P. Nelson, C. M. Dow, C. R. Van Hise, A. W. Anderson, Rufus B. Smith, George V. Borchsenius, Paul D. Gurnee, E. F. Gibbs, R. N. Qualey, N. P. Stenjem, John M. Nelson, George P. Miller, C. G. Riley, H. C. Winter, George S. Post, C. E. Shaffer, G. E. Fess, Madison; H. B. Dahle, O. A. Stolen, Mt. Horeb; Eli Pederson, Primrose; C. W. Netherwood, H. M. Haskell, Oregon; E. F. Scherbel, Middleton; H. J. Spaulding, Vienna; H. B. Fargo, Nels Holman, Deerfield; E. J. Onstad, Chris Legried, Cambridge; G. J. Fjelstad, Lawrence Post, Perry; John M. Estes, Pleasant Springs; Julius Johnson, O. K. Roe, Albert Burrill, Ben Compton, Erick Olson, H. A. Huber, Stoughton; J. Q. Emery, Albion; John S. Donald, Springdale; W. S. Hidden, Sun Prairie; E. C. Meland, De Forest; J. C. Hanson, Deerfield.

DODGE COUNTY—Henry Dahl, Walter Zerbel, Albert Loeffler, Arthur Benke, Charles Cohn, Fred Hinzl, Dr. Neal Barber, John Evans, Jr., D. S. Evans, Christ Lenz, David Jones, Peter Thauer, August Krueger, Alex Krueger, Leonard Triplett, W. E. Gruetzmacher, John Zarwell, Watertown; A. C. Beeher, Otto Radke, Henry Weisenheimer, Henry Weisensell, F. A. Rupnow, Juneau; William Wegwart, Emil Meleher, Woodland; Herman Wedenmeyer, Pat Sullivan, Edward Barnick, Charles Higgins, Richwood; J. F. Zarwell, Fred Zarwell, Louis Ebert, Beaver Dam; J. Labuwi, C. J. Schoenfeld, J. M. Weisenheim, G. A. Franke, Neosho; M. Williams, Carl Porter, Fox Lake; Oscar Faber, Alvin Drager, Dr.

W. Hinke, John Wheeler, William Kohl, Fred Sommers, Ernest Adelmeyer, Mayville; T. P. Perkins, Dr. W. Hipke, Fred Sommers, Hustisford; Edward Westfahl, Ed. Behfel, Andrew Washburn, Roy Tillotson, W. A. Van Brunt, Horicon; John Ludetke, Iron Ridge; Alex Keel, Henry Ackermann, Lowell.

DOOR COUNTY—H. J. Sanderson, Henry Overbeek, Henry Graas, Sturgeon Bay; Thomas Reynolds, Jacksonport; Alexander Lawson, Sr., Forestville; Joseph Jirtle, H. L. Peterson, Sawyer; August Olson, Clay Banks; A. Hogenson, Liberty Grove; James Hanson, H. R. Holand, Ephraim; N. J. Delfasse, Union; Frank Wellever, Egg Harbor; L. L. Johnson, Sawyer.

DOUGLAS COUNTY—I. L. Lenroot, E. Kirby Thomas, John L. Erickson, Victor Linley, C. H. Crownhart, A. C. Titus, A. J. Vinje, W. W. Andrew, R. J. Nye, A. W. Durley, Halford E. Erickson, George B. Hudnall, John Erickson, H. W. Dietrich, W. R. Foley, Superior.

DUNN COUNTY—Albert R. Hall, Timothy Murphy, Knapp; O. G. Kinney, S. S. Sivertson, Colfax; J. C. Wilcox, Judge John Kelly, J. E. Florin, James H. Stout, Menomonie; Sven Anderson, Wheeler; D. C. Coolidge, A. L. Best, Downing.

EAU CLAIRE COUNTY—Peter J. Smith, Mort McMillan, George Witherby, Dr. J. H. Noble, A. J. Klofanda, Fred M. Miner, Julius C. Gilbertson, W. A. Teall, C. N. Sprague, C. A. Evans, B. B. Foster, Eau Claire; C. N. Saugen, Eleva; Cal. McCumber, Fairchild.

FLORENCE COUNTY—

FOND DU LAC COUNTY—John E. Williams, Frank Bacon, Waupun; F. E. Wilson, W. H. Englebright, H. A. Weil, William Soule, C. H. Dodge, Roy Reed, Ripon; George Stelter, Fairwater; William Witte, Campbellsport; H. A. Ripley, Oakfield; William Mauthe, George Ferris, Fond du Lac.

FOREST COUNTY—John F. Hooper, William Kennard,

Ward Wescott, Henry Andrews, Fred Andrews, John Krumm, Crandon.

GRANT COUNTY—W. D. Richardson, Richard Meyer, Jr., C. H. Baxter, Edward Pollock, Stephen Taylor, Thomas McDonald, J. H. Howe, George W. Ryland, William Ziegler, George Clementson, Robert Draper, John Schreiner, David Schreiner, Lancaster; Dwight T. Parker, Henry E. Roethe, Fennimore; L. M. Oakey, J. Kleinpell, Cassville; Sam Birch, Beetown; Andrew Hutton, George D. Beck, J. V. Holman, E. E. Burns, Charles L. Harper, George B. Carter, Platteville; Capt. H. Young, G. Davis, Robert Collier, Patch Grove; J. A. Cabanis, Georgetown; Joseph Harris, Jefferson Crawford, Hazel Green; Milton Woodhouse, Herman Enke, Bloomington; P. T. Stevens, Rufus Quick, Joseph Chandler, Montfort; Rufus M. Day, Alexander Cairns, D. L. Brunson, Mt. Hope; Thomas Watson, Charles Watson, J. Livingston, Livingston; John J. Blaine, Boscobel; S. E. Smalley, Cuba City.

GREEN COUNTY—John L. Sherron, Harvey Clark, George Pietzseh, Emery Odell, A. S. Douglas, Monroe; Fred Ties, Brodhead; Sol Levitan, Oswald Kubley, George Pierce, New Glarus; A. B. Comstock, Albany; Andrew Lewis, S. E. Richards, Monticello.

GREEN LAKE COUNTY—Horace E. Stedman, Charles H. Russell, Newcomb Spoor, Fred Engelbracht, Sr., Ernst Greverus, Thomas McKinney, Berlin; Charles F. Schrader, Herman Abendroth, Charles Degener, August Welk, Markesan; Dr. R. H. Buckland, Green Lake; Frank A. Meyer, Brooklyn; R. H. Spragg, Marquette; Fred Spooner, Philip Lehner, Princeton; Henry Prieve, St. Marie.

IOWA COUNTY—A. S. Hearn, J. P. Smelker, Orville Strong, Arthur L. Jones, Thomas Rogers, T. J. Jones, Henry Roberts, W. J. Pearee, William Williams, Dodgeville; Phil Allen, Sr., John Francis, Badge Miner, Ben

Bennett, W. H. Bennett, George C. Cox, Mineral Point; Levi W. Pollard, R. T. Richards, Joseph Heathcock, Henry D. James, Linden; Thomas Gibbon, Thomas Raine, Mifflin; R. L. Joiner, James Lloyd Jones, Wyoming; Evan Lewis, Ridgeway; Thomas Williams, W. J. Pryor, Barneveld; Al. Rewey, Rewey; William Meffert, Arena; Henry Culver, Cobb.

IRON COUNTY—James Overholtzer, Eagle River.

JACKSON COUNTY—George F. Cooper, G. M. Hull, Merlin Hull, Martin Tollaek, J. J. McGillivray, M. A. Lien, E. J. Bonnell, Black River Falls; S. M. Curran, Taylor; W. S. Braddock, Mather; J. T. Ringrose, Alma Center; H. A. M. Steen, Northfield; Neils Heggen, York; N. N. Nelson, Curran; J. O. McNutt, Warrens; Edward But-ton, Melrose.

JEFFERSON COUNTY—W. D. Hoard, L. B. Caswell, Frank Scribner, E. A. Wigdale, Geo. Beecher, E. A. McPherson, Geo. Stevens, G. W. Dexheimer, Leonard Webb, George Schilling, H. H. Curtis, Jud Gates, R. T. Hunter, O. W. Donkle, Ft. Atkinson; C. L. Church, John Marshall, Edward Parrish, Clarence Steele, Fred Sheriff, Henry Wilber, Myron Piper, Whitewater; John Ervins, W. E. Blumenstein, A. A. Lepperd, Mart Roethle, Ollie F. Friedel, Jos. McLery, Fred Bartlett, Sullivan; Will Hoffman, William Brown, Hebron; Louis Auerbach, Rome; Ray T. Twining, Alex. Archie, D. J. Hoyt, H. M. Knowlton, H. W. Stokes, Ben Crump, W. F. Stiles, Waterloo; J. H. Gosa, M. J. Gosa, F. G. Ervins, C. H. Golden, William Ervins, William Uglow, Palmyra; Richard Knell, Dr. John Gargen, John Gates, Richard Stewart, Cambridge; W. F. Gruetzmaeher, William F. Whyte. Dr. A. H. Hartwig, Nicholas Thauer, William Gordon, Gust Bucheit, Harry Downing, A. B. Liebermann, Dr. Eugen Goldner, Frank Goldner, Thomas Perry, Paul G. Volkmann, Julius Volkmann, Frank Volkmann, James Meehan, Edwin Witte, Henry Weimann, Henry Louns-

bury, Fremont Lounsbury, Watertown; Frank Marsh, E. C. Dewara, Albert Hanke, O. H. Stevens, William Voight, George Munsell, F. J. Fleming, George Fleming, J. M. Gannon, Martin Puenice, C. H. Henry, C. E. Copeland, C. C. Fox, Ole Olson, Herman Ladien, Jefferson; George Wertheimer, H. W. Gallup, M. E. Sanders, Edwin H. Wollin, F. C. Mansfield, Will Schallert, Johnson's Creek; Owen Roberts, Carl Marlow, Ixonia; F. C. Greenwood, H. T. Nicholai, E. C. Dodge, Frank Fargo, W. F. M. Meyers, Fred Curr, John Millard, Ed Kisow, David Sheldon, Julius Cooper, Frank Schutz, Lake Mills.

JUNEAU COUNTY—J. K. Powell, Charles A. Leicht, U. S. Baer, H. J. Mortenson, New Lisbon; A. C. Johnson, Camp Douglas; Dr. G. H. Parham, Necedah; J. F. Dithmar, Elroy; M. L. Bunnell, Mauston.

KENOSHA COUNTY—W. M. Curtis, Trevor; A. E. Buckmaster, F. G. Babcock, R. V. Baker, Kenosha; F. R. Lavey, Charles Marseh, Frank Rowbatton, Bristol; Richard Swanson, John T. Thompson, Wilmot; Ward Bloss, Salem; Isaae T. Bishop, Somers; F. W. Robert, Woodworth; Frank Shuart, Pleasant Prairie.

KEWAUNEE COUNTY—Joseph F. Valecka, Edwin Albertson, Carl Schneider, George W. Wing, John Dishmaker, Thomas Chapman, Mat Sinianek, Joseph G. Walceka, Anton Dishmaker, George R. Wilbur, M. T. Parker, Anton G. Schauer, Kewaunee.

LACROSSE COUNTY—E. M. Wing, John E. McConnell, Thomas Morris, Otto Bosshard, A. M. Brayton, W. B. Tseharner, LaCrosse; V. S. Keppel, Holman; S. W. Brown, William Bradley, T. P. Coburn, West Salem.

LAFAYETTE COUNTY—Harry C. Martin, R. J. Wilson, Willis R. Law, W. J. Hoeking, Darlington; C. C. Bennett, South Wayne; James McGinty, T. J. Kilpatrick, Kendall; John Waddington, John Powell, Argyle; J. J. Uren, Peter Olson, Blanchardville; William Keuling, William Look, Shullsburg, Sherman T. Dodge, George

Watson, New Diggings; A. A. Eastman, Robert Stuart, F. H. Underhill, J. J. Iverson, Wayne; O. M. Richards, B. F. Buckmaster, Fayette; Harrison Bragg, Herod True, Henry Tipp, Gratiot; Robert Farren, Edward Bretz, Dumbarton, W. B. Vail, John Huntington, Belmont; O. J. Lovelass, Ole C. Walden, H. C. Larson, Charles Arnott, Julius Engebretson, Wiota; H. M. Bridgman, Charles Lancaster, Lamont; Frank Higgins, Darlington.

LANGLADE COUNTY—I. D. Steffen, C. O. Marsh, J. J. Laughlin, William Ings, H. J. Morgan, Judge W. F. White, Antigo.

LINCOLN COUNTY—W. H. Flett, Ralph E. Smith, F. H. Hillyer, F. M. Montgomery, Frank Debarr, C. S. Stimers, J. A. Niles, Oscar Gagnon, L. A. Jopke, Victor Larson, Merrill; George M. Sheldon, E. W. Whitson, Tomahawk; H. H. Stolle, Tripoli; Amandus Johnson, Spirit Falls.

MANITOWOC COUNTY—Simon Wehrwein, Thomas E. Torrison, A. J. Torrison, Dr. G. W. Patchen, A. P. Schenian, John C. Dedricks, Carl N. Zander, F. J. Taugher, Manitowoc; Ole Berge, Valders; August Wilsman, Martin Graus, Two Rivers; Rudolph Soukup, Nicholas Scheuer, John Sporer, G. Koehler, Mishicott; Frank Kugle, Cooperstown.

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MARQUETTE COUNTY—S. W. Butler, F. J. Kimball, Montello; Eben S. Hunt, Endeavor; E. H. Kempley, Packwaukee.

MILWAUKEE COUNTY—(See story of year 1898).

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OCONTO COUNTY—T. E. Mills, Leslie C. Harvey, George Beyer, E. A. Edmonds, Henry Johnson, Oliver Truedell.

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OUTAGAMIE COUNTY—J. Henry Harbeck, F. M. Wileox, B. C. Wolter, Charles Clack, T. F. Stark, G. R. Downer, F. E. Clark, George D. Wood, Fred Plainan, C. B. Ballard, Appleton; Peter Tubbs, Seymour; H. M. Culbertson, Medina; John Mitchell, Kaukauna.

OZAUKEE COUNTY—Eugene S. Turner, Dr. William P. McGovern, H. L. Coe, A. D. Bolens, Port Washington; Henry Wittenberg, A. R. Buerner, Cedarburg; Henry Mohrhuse, Sr., Henry Mohrhuse, Jr., Thiensville.

PEPIN COUNTY—W. V. Dorwin, Burr W. Tarrant, C. A. Ingram, C. H. Schleuter, M. H. Newcomb, Pepin; A.

T. Josephson, Stockholm; Frank Eekler, Frankfort; H. M. Mills, Arkansaw; Andrew Rohrscheit, Albany.

PIERCE COUNTY—N. P. Haugen, W. D. Parker, Frank Ensign, C. E. Hanson, River Falls; W. C. Oltman, Oluff Halls, J. F. Shaw, Ellsworth; Walter C. Owen, Maiden Rock; Herman Peterson, Martell; John Thompson, Gilman.

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PORTAGE COUNTY—L. R. Larson, Dr. R. D. Rood, A. R. Week, C. D. McFarland, J. J. Nelson, L. J. N. Murat. George B. Nelson, F. H. Timm, Gerhard M. Dahl, M. O. Wrolstad, F. B. Lamoreux, Carl O. Doxrud.

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RACINE COUNTY—C. C. Gittings, Racine; John O. Thomas, H. F. Johnson, Caledonia; George West, J. H. Kamper, Joseph Hay, Franksville; J. H. Smith, Kansasville; John T. Riee, Edward Mills, Burlington; John Gittings, J. S. Blakey, Union Grove.

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ROCK COUNTY—Frank P. Starr, Stewart Heddles, Victor Richardson, Janesville; Perry C. Wilder, F. W. Gilman, George L. Pullen, A. C. Gray, Charles E. Moore, Evansville; L. E. Gettle, T. B. Earle, Hugh McInnis. John Mawhinney, Edgerton; Robert Dowd, C. D. Rosa, Harry W. Adams, Beloit; Erie Haugen, H. C. Taylor.

Edward Eagen, Orfordville; E. C. McGowan, J. H. Owen, Milton Junction; Ezra Goodrich, Milton.

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SHAWANO COUNTY—Jonas Swenholt, I. R. Nyc, E. A. Ketcham, Wittenberg; E. V. Werner, Anton Kuckuk, W. E. Wilson, Dr. H. W. Partlow, M. J. Wallrich, Shawano.

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TAYLOR COUNTY—Peter Liberty, Stetsonville; G. W. Adams, J. B. Hagarty, E. L. Urquhart, W. E. Hibbard, Medford; W. H. Allen, Chelsea; Frank M. Perry, A. Premeau, Westboro; J. J. Vormastek, Louis Olson, Rib Lake.

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VERNON COUNTY—Oliver G. Munson, Frank Tatem, William Kingston, Dr. M. Sorenson, C. J. Smith, Dr. Fred Wilkins, Viroqua; A. H. Dahl, Brown Olson, Westby; J. J. Marshall, LaFarge; Engebret Hage, Harmony; John Foster, DeSoto.

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WALWORTH COUNTY—Edward Eames, Samuel Mitchell, E. J. Hooper, E. H. Sprague, Robert Lean, Sidney C. Goff, John Snyder, editor *Independent*; S. P. Morrison, Elkhorn; Maurice Morrissey, editor *Delavan Republican*, Delavan; Fred Kull, Lake Geneva.

WASHBURN COUNTY—Andrew Ryan, editor *Washburn Register*; A. A. Lavall, James Wynne, Frank Pease, Shell Lake; Ole Soholt, Madge.

WASHINGTON COUNTY—Don Maxon, Schlesingerville; P. W. Graemer, Rockfield; L. D. Guth, Kewaskum; Lorenz Guth, C. F. Leins, West Bend; C. L. Brink, Hartford.

WAUKESHA COUNTY—S. E. Gernon, O. P. Clinton, Frank Shultis, Theron W. Haight, Henry Lockney, Waukesha; Roderick Ainsworth, Merton; George E. Hoyt, Menomonee Falls; J. A. Peacock, L. J. Lehman, William Kittle, John Bartlett, Dr. J. J. Pink, William Meadows, Adam Blanchard, Oconomowoc; Charles Solverson, Nashotah; Esau Beumont, Hartland; H. M. Youmans, Waukesha.

WAUPACA COUNTY—E. E. Browne, Fred Roche, John Madsen, W. H. Holmes, W. O. Ware, A. R. Potts, Waupaca; Dr. H. A. Meileke, Clintonville; Dr. W. Irvine, Manawa; N. C. Nelson, Barney Peterson, Gunder Bergen, Iola; Thomas Thoreson, James Anderson, Scandinavia; W. H. Hatton, W. H. Dick, W. E. Lipke, New London; George E. Beedle, George Delaney, Embarrass; Emil Steiger, Fremont.

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WINNEBAGO COUNTY—A. J. Barber, Herman Daus, W. N. Armington, R. L. Clark, E. R. Hicks, Oshkosh; W. E. Hurlbut, C. H. Larrabee, J. N. Tittimore, S. Leighton, Omro; Daniel Jones, Poygan; Charles Appley, Rushford; John A. Fridd, Nepenskum; Joseph Hill, Nels Radick, Menasha; J. H. Dennhardt, John Strange, H. J. Frank, S. B. Baird, B. E. Pride, E. Van Slyke, Neenah; Fred Palmer, Clayton; M. F. White, George Miller, David Fredenburg, Winneconne; H. O. Stromme, A. C. Jorgenson, Kittle Knutson, Joseph D. Hough, Winchester; Timothy Allen, Sr., Vinland; Daniel Shea, Utica; A. T. Grundy, L. H. Thompson, George Jones, William Jones, town of Neenah; John Hicks, Oshkosh.

WOOD COUNTY—Frank A. Cady, W. D. Connor, John White, George Upham, Evan Upham, E. E. Winch, R. L. Kraus, P. N. Christensen, R. E. Andrew, Marshfield; A. L. Fontaine, T. W. Brazeau, Grand Rapids; J. Goldworthy, Nicholas Streveler, Vesper.

A TRIBUTE FROM EARLY DAYS

Eureka Springs, Ark., April 17, 1912.

Mr. A. O. Barton, Madison, Wis.

Dear Sir: I am in receipt of your communication of February 19, asking a short article from me regarding what I know of Robert M. LaFollette during his early boyhood. I am indeed glad that I am permitted to say a word concerning, in any way or any part, the life of such a grand and noble champion of human rights and freedom of the masses, as we know Robert to be.

My father, Joel Britts, moved to Wisconsin in the spring of 1848, from Ladoga, Ind., settling in Primrose township, Dane county, 21 miles southwest of Madison. I was at that time ten years of age and well remember that neighbors were not numerous, as some of our most intimate ones lived from two to four miles from us. At that time roving bands of Indians were familiar sights and constant vigilance was necessary to protect our sheep, pigs and in fact all young stock from the flocks of wolves, lynx and bobcats that infested the country at that time. My father and brothers built and ran the well-known Britts' grist mill west of Mt. Vernon.

Josiah LaFollette came from the same part of Indiana that my parents did and settled within two miles of us. I do not remember the exact date of their coming. Having been old neighbors in Indiana, we were, of course, quite intimate. The family, as I knew it later on consisted of Mr. and Mrs. LaFollette, Helen Buchanan, a daughter of Mrs. LaFollette by a previous marriage; William T. LaFollette, Josephine and Robert Marion. The eldest daughter, Helen, was a bright and splendid girl. All the boys were in love with her, but I admired her most of any of them, because she was the only one in all that section who could spell me down at our spelling schools. Dean Eastman came and stole our Helen from us. He may be all right to this day, but it would require evidence to convince me of the fact.

Next in the family was William, a sturdy, sensible boy who took kindly to the hard work we were all expected to do, but was of a studious turn and proved far above the mediocre in grasping the slender straws of advantage that blew our way in those days.

Next came Josephine, and a darling waif was she, of bright penetrating eyes with a twinkle of merriment that savored of the "I've-got-you-cornered" spirit when she beat me at playing "tit-tat-toe."

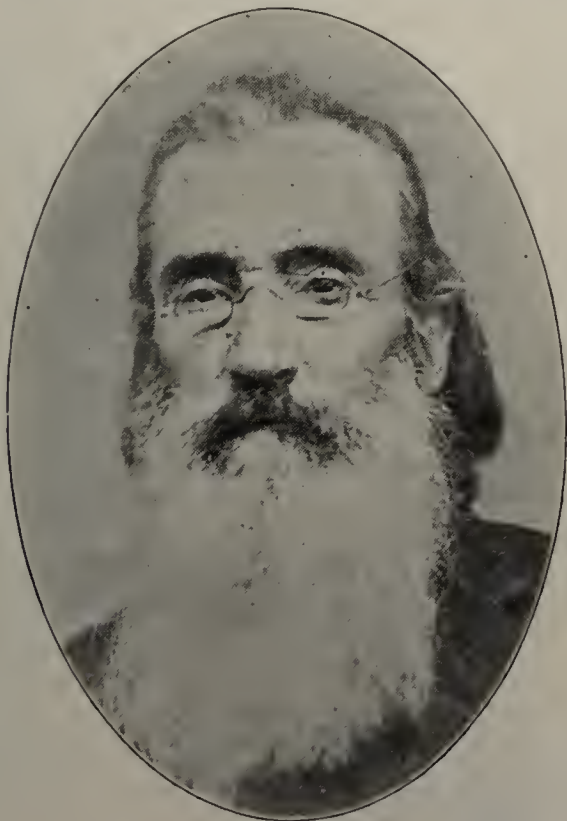
Last in the family came little Bobbie. He was plump and full-fledged as a baby should be, but there seemed nothing about him then to mark him as a superior chunk of clay. There were other babies as pretty and cute as he but somehow Bobbie had a way of his own, and it was a winning way, as he always gained his point in everything he set himself about. Where did he get this manner and his indomitable will—his steadfast determination to do certain things and to do them right? Well, I will tell you. He received them from his mother. He inherited the talent and then cultivated it later on.

I well remember a man by the name of Peter Nace, who lived on the road to Black Earth, a Virginian by birth, who had come north in an early day. He was a man above the average and a leader in thought. I remember one night when he was staying with us he and my father were discussing the merits of Lincoln and Douglas while these men were rivals for senatorial honors. My father remarked that while Abe Lincoln was not as polished by education as was Mr. Douglas, yet he seemed to be the abler man. Mr. Nace at once replied, "That's due to his mother," then added:

"When you are talking about your great man tell me about his mother and I will tell you about him. I care nothing about the

father, but the mother must have been a superior woman if your great man is genuine."

How truly this statement applies to Little Bobbie and his mother. While his father was a man of strong intellectual cast,



JOEL BRITTS,
Prominent Early Settler of Primrose, Wis.

I know but little of him personally, as he died when Robert was a mere baby, but the mother I well remember as a most lovable and sensible woman, logical and sane in all her plans and decisions, ever kind and considerate in her family circle and toward her neighbors, and in all a most estimable character, whom everyone knowing her loved for her intrinsic value as a friend.

I knew Robert up to the age of twelve as a shrewd, sagacious boy, not free from the general character of boys of his age—and

many was the cunning joke he perpetrated on those around him, especially on his stepfather, "Uncle John" Saxton.

My wife and I visited the family shortly after our marriage and on our way to Minnesota. They lived at Argyle at the time and Robert had carried water to the elephant for a free ticket to a circus that had strayed into Argyle, and his services were so well appreciated that the showman while feeding guinea pigs to the boa constrictor gave Bob two of the smallest ones because of his pathetic plea to spare their lives. Later on those young guineas became a nuisance and Bob asked as a favor that I accept them as a wedding present, which I gladly did, and when leaving I presented him with a silver dollar. I have a letter from him since he became a United States senator saying: "I used to look at that dollar and see visions of fortune loom up before my mental horizon in the near future." But as the fortune never has materialized, I suppose more noble aspirations dominated his mental and spiritual nature, as we see him today, a poor man comparatively, battling fearlessly for human rights when we all know he might have been an easy going man of wealth had he chosen to serve mammon instead of his fellows.

If our country should need a strong pilot along the course of statecraft a safer or saner man could not be found for the job than our own Senator Robert Marion LaFollette. There would not even be the semblance of an experiment in trying him, as he has been thoroughly tested in administrative ability. What he has done for Wisconsin he could and would do for the United States.

SAM H. BRITTS.



Old LaFollette Farm, Primrose, Wis.,
August, 1919

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